

JERSEY BEAT

#32

\$1.00



BOBBY EBZ
Genocide

Invasion of the
Hoboken Pop
Zombies

Richard Barone
dB's
Yung Wu
Speed The Plough
Genocide
Destroy All Bands
Too many reviews

Back From The Grave



29A



30



30A

31



31A

32



32A

33

33A

34

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Welcome back

JERSEY BEAT

VOL. VI, NO. III

ISSUE 32

One thing I have to agree with Cosloy about, it's dumb when fanzines apologize for being late. Okay, sure, this issue should have been finished a few weeks ago (well, a month ago...but who's counting?). It's not like you were all holding your breath waiting for us to show up. And Lord knows there are enough other fanzines around to keep your minds occupied. And if we're late, well, heck, so's the Yung Wu LP, and that Electric Love Muffin album that Buy Our promised us a month ago, and lots of other stuff. This new-wave anarcho-underground punk-rock revolution we're all waging doesn't punch a time clock, y'know.

If there's a "theme" this time around, it's survival. We're still here, and so are a bunch of our friends, and some of 'em (Richard Barone, the Alter Boys, Mick & Bob of Mod Fun, et al.) are doing quite well for themselves, thank you. If you want any deeper thoughts than that, go read "The Big Takeover." And speaking of which, Jack Rabid had yet another one of those editorials in which he said exactly what I was going to say (except he always does it first, and better), when he wrote about the proliferation - the inundation - of the marketplace with independent records. There are too damn many record reviews in this issue, but then there are too many record reviews in new issues of The Bob and Big Takeover and every other zine, and that's because there are too many records out there. It used to mean something to release a 12" piece of vinyl. Not anymore. And so we poor ink-stained anarcho-underground punk-rock wretches wile away our lonely lives, listening to dozens upon dozens of these circular petroleum-based abortions, trying to ferret out the few listenable ones and pass the news along to y'all. It's an ugly job, but somebody's got to do it. So shaddup already with how long you had to wait for this issue and enjoy it. Words & pictures by the usual bunch of crazies, and a big heartfelt thanks to everyone of 'em.

And we're sorry for being so late.

Jim Testa
October 11, 1987

Last Minute Details

The Destroy All Bands interview noted on the cover will appear next issue (thanks, Nitti). dB's photos in this issue courtesy of Dawn Eden/dB's Fan Club Archives. Apologies to Bobby Sutliff (we spelled his name wrong). Special thanks to Buy Our Records, Forefront Records, and a special thanks to Jim DeRogatis for the last-minute Midnight delivery. Lead singer Janus has rejoined Sacred Denial as of presstime. And finally, apologies to anyone who has to pry off the staples from this issue to read it - our new electric stapler has a few bugs. Next time, wider margins...we promise!

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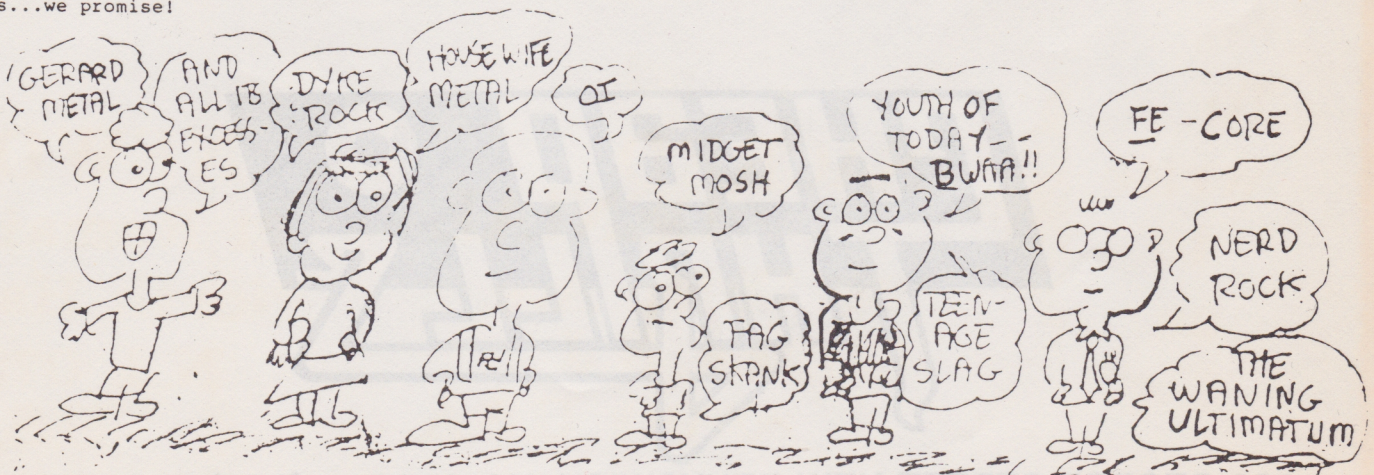
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John Crawford
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Member



JERSEY BEAT
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ELECTRIC LOVE MUFFIN
Playdoh Meathook, LP
Buy Our Records

If this LP had been released two years ago - when it was recorded - Electric Love Muffin would probably be bigger than the Hooters. If it had been released 5 years ago, well, the Muffin might have been signed to Warner Brothers by now and Husker Du would still be sitting home in Minneapolis waiting for the phone to ring. Electrifying punk-rock braced by a strong pop sense, the Muffin sound careens from cut to cut with awesome dexterity. They can be loud & raw, or nimbly harmonize. They bash their way through a Beatles cover and provide a theme song you can march to. This LP is about 3 songs shy of being perfect, and like the Replacements at their best, proves again the never-ending ability of garage-rock bands to crawl out of the woodwork and take over the world.

Wow.

- Jim Testa

DISCPAN HANDS, Compilation LP
 Rave, Box 40075, Phila. PA 19106
 From the nearly famous to the totally obscure, this Philly punk-rock sampler provides ample evidence that the City of Cheesesteaks is chockfull of talent. The dozen bands range from pop to thrash, with no common denominator that I can detect - other than the fact that I'd like to hear lots more from at least 2/3 of them. Best cuts: Homo Picnic, Trained Attack Dogs, and McRad, with at least a B+ going to efforts from Das Yahoos, the R.E.M.-y Balls, and Pagan Babies.

- Jim T.

HOMO PICNIC

Days Of Grey, LP

Plus, 5436 Discher St. Philadelphia, PA 19124
 They've been around the Philadelphia scene longer than many other bands. Their music is not so much straight punk rock as a mixture of garage, metal, grass roots, punk, and hardcore, yet they're constantly perceived as being nothing more than a punk rock band. They've always put out performances that have been energetic & fun. Despite all this, Homo Picnic has consistently lacked the kind of visibility and familiarity many of the other bands in Philadelphia who've gone on to bigger & better things have had. Days Of Grey will hopefully change some of that - it's a solid release that showcases the finer points of the band. The musicianship is basic guitar, bass, drums in no-mess-no-fuss unembellished arrangements. The songs are sincere, presented in an earnest, straightforward manner. It's definitely punk rock, for lack of a better definition, but don't be misled by the label. Days Of Grey is as much a rock 'n roll album as it is a hardcore album, and will hopefully do its part in getting Homo Picnic known as a rock 'n roll band, as much as the hardcore band they're known as now.

- Carol Schutzbank

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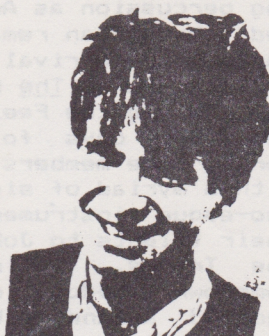
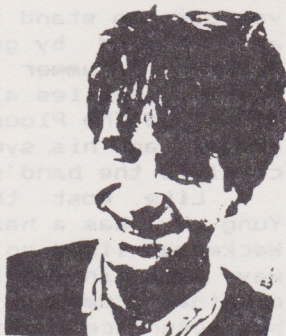
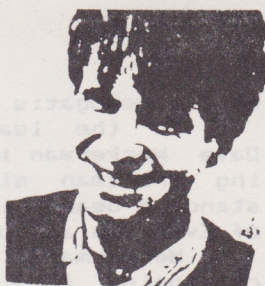
Like Chris

CHRIS STAMEY

It's Alright, LP
A&M/Coyote

It's Alright is the record Stamey fans have longed for since Chris left the dB's, and it surpasses all expectations. A refreshing blast of pure, powerful pop, it is instantly infectious yet intensely original - the first successful merger of Stamey's avant experimentalism and sugary pop aesthetic. Quite simply, it rules.

Since leaving the dB's in '82, Stamey has toyed with synthesizers, pseudo-scratch rhythms, and Eno-esque production, and he hasn't always been successful. It's A Wonderful Life was uneven and rhythmically choppy; Instant Excitement had moments but was ultimately too thin to stand up to repeated listenings; and Christmas Time was a bizarre seasonal throwaway. It's Alright maintains the trademark Stamey rhythms and meandering song structures, but they are tamed by a big, modern-sounding production that emphasizes the hooks that were too often buried under the sonic weirdness of the past.



Some devotees may cry "Sell out," but Stamey betrays none of his musical concepts - he only polishes them up a bit. Chris runs through the LP's 11 songs with help of a stellar group of guests - Anton Fier, Mitch Easter, Alex Chilton, and Marshall Crenshaw among them - and the only complaint is that there isn't enough of his ethereal guitar solos. The standout track is "Cara Lee," arguably the best song Chris has ever written; "From The Word Go," "If You Hear My Voice," and "Big Time" are the others with "hit" potential. But really, every song stands up to anything on, say, the dB's new record - or even anything they did in their prime.

It's interesting that It's Alright is a much more optimistic record than the dB's The Sound Of Music. While Peter Holsapple is still wallowing in self-pity, Chris is telling us everything's alright and crooning about "Incredible Happiness." Chris may have foundered for a time there, but this record is strong evidence that he's the half of the former dB's team that's got what it takes to grab the brass ring. The record - the first in the new Coyote/A&M partnership - reportedly sold 20,000 copies in its first week. Ultra-respectable for a semi-indie release.

Go for it, Chris. And Godspeed.
- Jim DeRogatis

ARTIFICIAL INSANITY

INTERVIEWS with
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art, tape, demo & records reviews

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Crocodile Shop

Head!

12-inch
out now!

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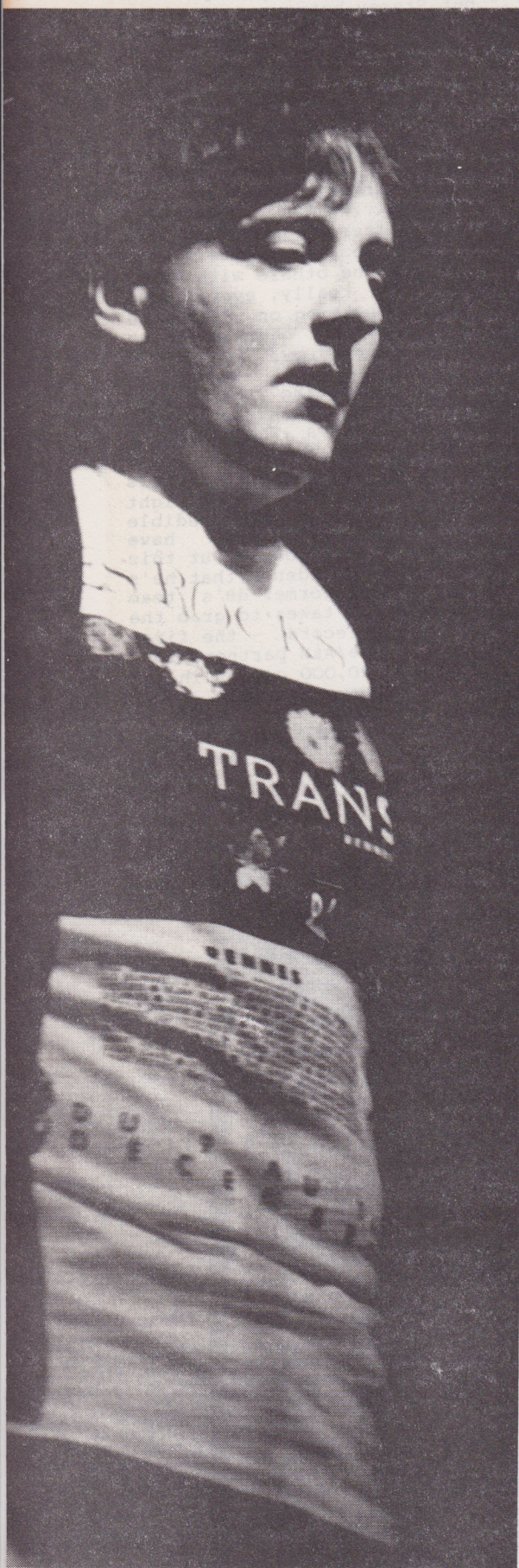


Photo by Andy Peters

by Jim DeRogatis

As the leader & inspiration behind Yung Wu, Dave Weckerman is the least likely yet most endearing frontman since Reg Presley of the Troggs, a standard bearer in the long, time-honored tradition of Everyman as rock'n roll God.

Weckerman, of course, is the tall, gangly percussionist for the Feelies, and Yung Wu is his vehicle to stand in the spotlight and shine. He is ably helped by guitarists Glenn Mercer and Bill Million, drummer Stan Demeski, and bassist Brenda Sauter, Feelies all. Keyboardist John Baumgartner of Speed The Plough is the only non-Feelie in the group, and his synthesizer, accordion, and Melodica complete the band's sound.

Like most things connected with the Feelies, Yung Wu has a hazy, somewhat mysterious origin. Weckerman lined up Feelies founders Mercer & Million way back in the late '70's, and served as their original drummer. He disappeared for several years, but resurfaced during the Crazy Rhythms days, playing percussion as Anton Fier (aka Andy Fisher) drummed. Weckerman remained in the percussionist's seat through the arrival of Stan Demeski and the release of last year's The Good Earth.

During the Feelies' inactive period in 1982 and '83, the days following the split with Stiff Records, the members of the group occupied themselves with a myriad of side projects, including performing Eno-esque instrumentals as The Willies and lending their talents to John Baumgartner's original group, The Trypes. During breaks in Trypes rehearsals in hometown Haledon, members switched instruments and "goofed around;" Weckerman wound up on guitar and vocals, and Yung Wu was born.

"We chose the name because it just sounded really funny at the time," said Weckerman, who admits to an affinity for things Chinese. The jacket of Yung Wu's new Coyote LP, Shore Leave, is from a picture book on Chinese war machines. "The Chinese had a lot of neat weapons," according to Dave.

Yung Wu first performed during a summer concert series called "Music For Neighbors" at the Haledon Peanut Gallery. The Trypes played one week, the Willies the next; whatever band was on the bill would back Dave up as "Yung Wu" as the opening act. "Mainly those shows were a drunken disaster on my part," Dave recalled.

"I just used to do lots of drugs and get really drunk and go up there. I never took it seriously until the band played me a tape of one of the shows and said, 'Hey, this could actually sound good.' But even then we never really rehearsed."

Yung Wu continued after the Feelies started playing out again, filling in at the last minute when a band cancelled at Maxwells, then slowly built up a dedicated following of fans who cheered the group's enigmatic vocalist.

Towering over the other musicians on stage, clad in black from head to foot, Weckerman nonchalantly quips with the audience between songs, reads his lyrics from a crumpled sheet of notebook paper, and gives his all to his strained but soulful Neil Young-meets-Tom Verlaine warbling. (He used to play guitar and talk to his bargain-basement axe when it went out of tune, before Mercer and Million convinced him to stick to singing, tambourine, and maracas.) Offstage, Dave's a pleasant fellow with a good, albeit twisted sense of humor, akin to a slightly saner Roky Erickson, or an Americanized Robyn Hitchcock.

Continued on next page



Photo by Andy Peters

The Wit & Wisdom of
Hung 100u

Yung Wu

Weckerman's uniquely goofy stage presence nicely offsets the ever-serious Feelies who back him up. While Feelies songs are often studies in tension and pent-up energy, Yung Wu songs are looser, freer - yeah, maybe even a bit sloppy. The trademark Feelies rhythms are still there, as well as Million's jangly rhythm guitar and Mercer's inspiring leads, but everything is one step closer to the garage.

Shore Leave collects eight Weckerman originals, familiar to anyone who's seen the band. "We did all the songs I've written in the last ten years - I average about one a year," Weckerman said. The lyrics to songs like "The Empty Pool," "Aspiration," and "Strange Little Man" are evocative, mysterious, and typically Weckerman, with lines like, "Let's drink the leper's beer," and "Barnacles form inside your thighs."

The album is topped off by three of Yung Wu's perennial covers - the Eno/Manzanera chestnut, "Big Day;" Neil Young's "Powderfinger;" and the Rolling Stones' classic "Child Of The Moon." The group's also been known to tackle Tom Verlaine's "Kingdom Come," "You Can't Always Get What You Want," and Donovan's "Season Of The Witch." [And don't forget Joni Mitchell's "Circle Game"! - Ed.]...covers as eclectic as Weckerman's influences.

"I just started playing music when I quit college to join a wedding band. I just wanted to play music, I didn't even care what it was, but then I met Glenn," Weckerman said.

His interest in rock 'n roll was spurred by Mercer and Million and their love of the Stooges and Velvet Underground; a few years later, it was enhanced by the Sex Pistols and Clash. Extra-Feelies projects for Dave have included "new wave" combo The Adults (featuring Rick Sullivan, publisher of "Gore Gazette"), who released one legendary single, and Mr. Baxter, a drum/guitar duo Weckerman described as country-via-the-Cramps. Weckerman continues to play drums with Sullivan in the fuzz-heavy garage band, The Creeping Pumpkins.

As far as the future of Yung Wu, Weckerman said it's a matter of "waiting to see what happens." The Feelies are due to record a followup to The Good Earth in the indefinite future, and Weckerman assumes Coyote Records saw the Yung Wu LP as a way to keep fans interested in the interim.

"I suppose if things really took off, we might do a short tour or something," Weckerman said modestly. He knows that with his looks and talent, it's just a matter of time before he's up there with the greats like Presley.

Reg, that is.

"I just started playing music when I quit college to join a wedding band...I just wanted to play music.

I didn't care what it was. But then I met Glenn."

"Being in the Feelies is kinda like living in this great pyramid - nothing ever changes and no one ever grows old."
- Dave Weckerman, 1984

TOP TEN HOMESTEAD ADVERTISING SLOGANS AND CONFLICT PUTDOWNS

10. "Life's too short to waste more than 23 minutes on an LP anyway!"
9. "Sounds like a demo tape --
--spins like a record!"
8. Hoser head
7. "Over 6 Thousand Served!"
6. "Don't check your needle - it's supposed to sound like that!"
5. Gorilla breath
4. "20,000 Fanzine Editors can't be be wrong!"
3. Needle dick
2. "Because Touch & Go turned them down."
1. "Tomorrow's SST superstars -
today!"



THE BRANDOS
Honor Among Thieves, LP

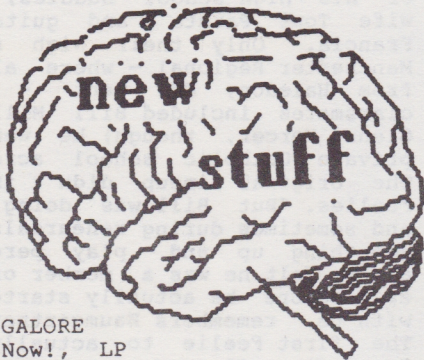
Relativity
As you start to get into the Brandos, the first thing you notice is an appealing rawness to the vocals - kind of like new music America's answer to Bryan Adams, or better yet an early Roger Daltry. Add to that catchy riffs in a strong urban pop-rock style and you're bound to have a winner. Well, almost a winner. The Brandos have a lot going for them, but they seem to lack the depth or musical maturity to carry it off. Perhaps with a bit of time that will change, but for now, after a few songs, the material starts to wear thin. Still, don't write them off. Honor Among Thieves is an auspicious debut that bodes well for future releases. If this were a report card, the grade would be a solid B - the remarks: "Needs to develop the potential that is there."

- Carol S.

CROCODILE SHOP

"Head" EP
Susstone, Box 6426, Minneapolis, MN 55406
A guitar band. It doesn't even take one song to leave you in doubt. But a guitar band with definite personality. Unlike a lot of the roots-clone R.E.M. would-be's roaming the musical highways, Crocodile Shop have their wheels spinning firmly in the right route. Incorporating some creativity into how they put across their music, the band presents a pleasing group of songs to the listener. There's a twang present, a nasally kind of twang that gives the material flavor. And there are light overtones of shadow and dusk that give the material depth and some shading. No, it's not 100% original. But it's not 100% copied, either. And it is 100% enjoyable. And for a first release, that's to be 100% commended.

- Carol Schutzbank



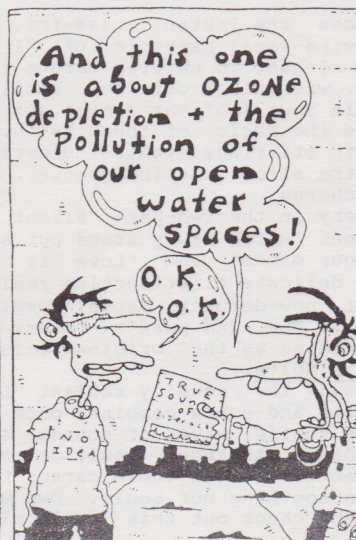
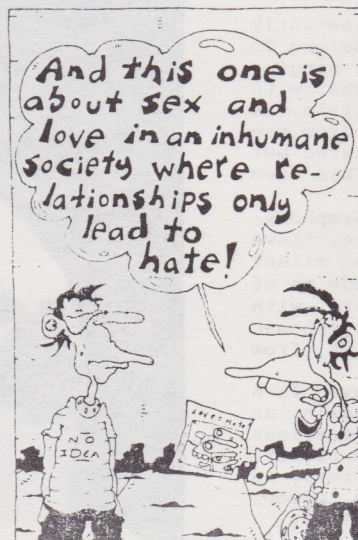
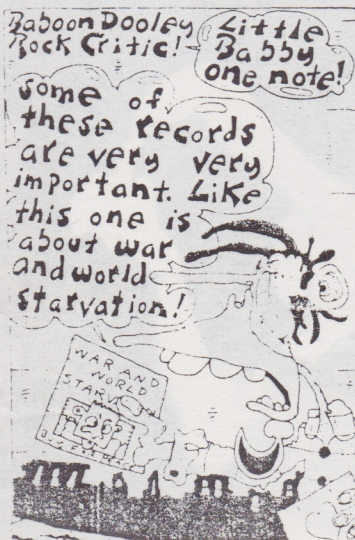
PUSSY GALORE
Right Now!, LP
Caroline

Imagine the Rolling Stones and The Cramps jamming in the style of early Sonic Youth. An idea like that conjures up a psychotic band like Pussy Galore. A collage (or is that barrage?) of sounds, the material on Right Now! doesn't so much sit on the vinyl as bleed all over it, making a disturbingly satisfying mess on the stereo and in your eardrums.

- Carol S.



CROCODILE SHOP



Numbers With Wings

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

RICHARD BARONE
COOL BLUE HALO, LP, CD, or Cassette
Passport Records

When last seen, The Bongos had been dropped from RCA after releasing their mostly critically-condemned LP, *Beat Hotel*. Old fans rejoiced, with hope of great things to come. The Bongos fell into limbo while searching for the appropriate label to give them a chance, once again, to be the next Beatles. [They eventually signed a disastrous contract with Island Records which bound them legally for years, unable to record for anyone else, even though Island decided not to release anything by the band itself. The Bongos become "free agents" again next February. - Ed.] Frontman Richard Barone, meanwhile, assembled a solo unit, as did guitarist James Mastro, who has since left the Bongos (replaced by onetime Void Oid Ivan Julian). Mastro has gone on to concentrate full-time on his solo project, *In A Strange Cave*, which features cellist Jane Scarpantoni (of Tiny Lights), who also appears on the dB's *The Sound Of Music* and this LP, Barone's first full solo record, *Cool Blue Halo*. Barone is no doubt fulfilling the early promise of the amazing Bongos, of the first LP era (1982/83).

Special thanks must go to Vin Scelsa (now of K-Rock and formerly of WNEW-FM, which has become the biggest culprit in NY radio for ignoring anything that is cool and/or unpredictable). Recorded live at the Bottom Line as part of a special series organized and promoted by Scelsa, the sound here is perfectly clean, beautifully done. The record features 3 older Bongos tunes, 3 well-selected covers, and 4 excellent newer songs. Stripped of the dense electric sound of the Bongos, the real beauty of these lovely melodies shines through. A perfect combination of exquisite vocals & harmonies, distinctively subtle electric & acoustic guitars, as well as minimal percussion and superb cello.

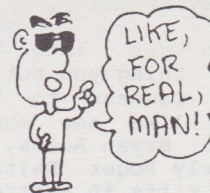
The 3 Bongo pieces have been peeled of their usual density, possibly in response to those critics who complained of the overproduction of the band's first RCA effort, the "Numbers With Wings" EP, where two of these tunes originated. The tasteful arrangements here are often minimal, yet achingly touching and consistently heartfelt. I am often left wondering what many of Barone's enigmatic lyrics are about: Just what is a "number with wings?" (Perhaps an interview is in store.)

Barone shows his influences quite openly in a rare moment, a first ever outing on vinyl of 3 cover tunes by the Three B's: Bolan/Beatles/Bowie. Among these is an obscure T-Rex song from 1970 called "The Visit," a perfect choice as Barone pulls off the haunting chorus with superb quivering vocals. Heavenly e-bow & cello lines blend together warmly. "Cry Baby Cry" sounds more natural than the Beatles version, an angelic study with appropriately odd lyrics ala' Lennon (who else?). Barone also refines his rendition of Bowie's "The Man Who Sold The World" (circa 1970), a much less threatening, more provocative attempt of this somewhat darker piece (which I believe is about a confrontation with God). A neat Eastern-sounding cello riff propels.

All four of the new pieces are instant classics, instantly memorable. The sweet, flowing vocal harmonies of "I Belong To Me" are stark, direct, and elegant in nature. Barone is singing directly from his heart, wrenching out them emotions with positive grace. "Tangled In Your Web" has a most apt title, as it exemplifies & verbalizes the magic of these tunes. From the lovely building of romantic stirrings to the understated but pretty guitar part, to the almost Latin groove. This gem features a most seductive chorus.

There is some fine imagery in the two-part "Silent Symphony/ Flew A Falcon." The two lines which truly stand out are, "Love is a hallucination in our minds" and "Love is a silent symphony." The infinitely delicate first section reminds me of the special soft drift of now-defunct Japan, complete with minimal marimba flourishes. The 2nd part's rather symphonic section is just as breathtaking as the original version, from Barone's 1/2 solo LP, *Nuts & Bolts*.

A dreamlike haze surrounds the equally radiant "Love Is A Wind That Screams." The cello and e-bow combine, once again, as one mesmerizing force, the subtle waves of sounds & feelings caressing our minds & bodies. An angel could do no better. Most refreshing. We all need to battle those darker forces, so here is a fine way to begin soothing our souls. Own up to your softer side for a change, and check out this lovely platter.



10 Fun Facts About Speed The Plough!

1. Speed The Plough is a punk rock band.
"We started out as just a bunch of friends who saw all these British bands making a certain type of music, and we just said, Hey, we can do that too! So we got together in a basement and started a band," explains John Baumgartner, the songwriter, keyboardist, and co-founder of Haledon's Speed The Plough. 'Course when Speed The Plough was born - with typical Do-It-Yourself punk-rock abandon, as described above - they were called The Trypes.

2. Speed The Plough is not a Feelies offshoot band.

And neither was The Trypes. The whole idea started among Baumgartner and some of his high school buddies, including wife Toni Paruta and guitarist Marc Francia. Only their high school was Manchester Regional - where all the kids from Haledon, NJ, went - and their classmates included Bill Million. (Not Glenn Mercer, though; he went to the private Catholic school across town.) The original lineup didn't include any Feelies. "But Bill was doing our sound and sometimes during rehearsals he'd pick something up and play percussion. I always felt he was a member of the band, even before he actually started to play with us," remembers Baumgartner. The first Feelie to actually join the Trypes was Glenn Mercer - on drums! He eventually moved to guitar and the band added the Feelies rhythm section, drummer Stan Demeski and bassist Brenda Sauter. "After Stanley and Brenda joined, it just seemed kind of natural to ask Bill too." By the time the Trypes released their Coyote EP, "The Explorers Hold," the band was widely regarded as another Feelies side-project, like the Willies...even though Baumgartner was still writing and arranging most of the songs.

Continued - turn page!





Speed The Plough

THE dB'S The Sound Of Music, LP I.R.S.

Four minutes into Side 1 and all I could think of was Steve Albini's curt dismissal of Like This, the last dB's album: "Who're they kidding - this is the new Bryan Adams record." Granted, compared to most of what passes for Rock today, the dB's still outshine the competition. But as I discovered one weekend this summer, trapped in a summer house with nothing but MTV and WNEW-FM for company, that doesn't mean much these days. Maybe it isn't fair to expect this new record - the dB's first in 3 years - to compare with Repercussions or Stands For Decibels; but then, they did have three years to get their act together. And this is the best they could do?

Mostly it seems a matter of Peter Holsapple's muse taking a permanent vacation. Like the weaker songs on 1984's Like This, too much of The Sound Of Music reworks familiar riffs and spins songs out of tired cliches (lines like "change with the changing times" or "today could be the day" or worst of all, "working for somebody else"... who're they kidding, this is the new Huey Lewis record!). Only "Molly Says" - an ancient Holsapple composition - captures the old magic: "She could stand on top of the world/and still complain that she couldn't see/she could stand in a deep deep hole/and still look down on me." Now that's songwriting. With a few exceptions (side 2's "Never Before And Never Again" has the old zing too), most of the other songs show the same decline in quality as the difference between, say, Chilton's "The Ballad of El Goodo" on #1 Record and "No Sex." Weak points go beyond the songwriting; Holsapple's singing sounds flat and uninspired on too many cuts, and Will Rigby's drums lack their usual snap (on "Bonneville," he sounds sedated). And for a record 3 years in the making, there isn't any of that chimerical guitar that transformed songs like "Neverland" and "Black And White" into classics of their genre.

Ok, maybe it's not fair to keep comparing the dB's now to the dB's then. But after three years in the making, The Sound Of Music should explode off your turntable. As it is, this record barely has the energy to revolve 33 1/3 times a minute.

- Jim Testa

I Never Promised You A Baumgartner



Peter Holsapple confronts another turkey.

speed the plough

3. The Trypes had a love/hate affair with their Feelies association.

"It was kind of annoying at times," says Baumgartner, "people would come to see us and ask for Feelies songs. But it was also nice to be able to play places like Maxwells and the Peppermint Lounge without paying any real dues, just because Bill and Glenn were in the band. And of course we got the record deal pretty easily. So there were advantages."

4. Speed The Plough doesn't want to be regarded as a George Harrison tribute band.

The Trypes, and later Speed The Plough, included in their set a number of songs by George Harrison in his raga/India mystic style, but Baumgartner insists there was never any conscience attempt to be "Beatlesque." "We were writing all these songs in minor keys anyway, and some of us just liked that kind of material, so it just fit into the set," says Baumgartner.

5. The Trypes never really broke up.

Speed The Plough was born after the Feelies reignited their career "and we just kind of realized that five members of [the Trypes] were going to be very busy doing other things, so we decided to start something on our own," explains Toni Paruta. "Technically, the Trypes never really broke up, and there's certainly no hard feelings," adds Baumgartner. In fact, up to a few months ago, Coyote's Steve Fallon was still asking about the "next" Trypes LP.

6. The "new" Speed The Plough thinks they're better than the "old" Speed The Plough.

"Basically, I think it's just a matter that the songs I'm writing now are better, and the band is working harder and playing better than before," opines Baumgartner.

7. Speed The Plough is Frank O'Toole's first band.

Speed The Plough's lineup has changed several times, coalescing about a year ago with an interesting mixture of familiar names & faces and newcomers to the band scene. Original members Baumgartner (keyboards), Paruta (vocals, flute, woodwinds), and Francia (guitar) recruited Jim DeRogatis (Love Pushers, Ex-Lion Tamers) on drums, Frank O'Toole (Wednesday night dj on WFMU) on guitar, and Pete Pedulla (Ex-Lion Tamers, Big Fence) on bass.

8. Speed The Plough doesn't really play in bizarre time signatures.

Rumors of 9/5 time and triple-syncopated rhythms began to surface because Speed The Plough's music sounded so ethereal and otherworldly. But in fact, says drummer Jim DeRogatis, much of the music is fairly straightforward. "The strangest [time signature] is 3/4 time, or maybe 7/8," explains Jim. "It just sounds weird because...we don't have a backbeat like other rock bands. It's more like a undertow, washing the music along with it."

9. Speed The Plough doesn't like to perform in public.

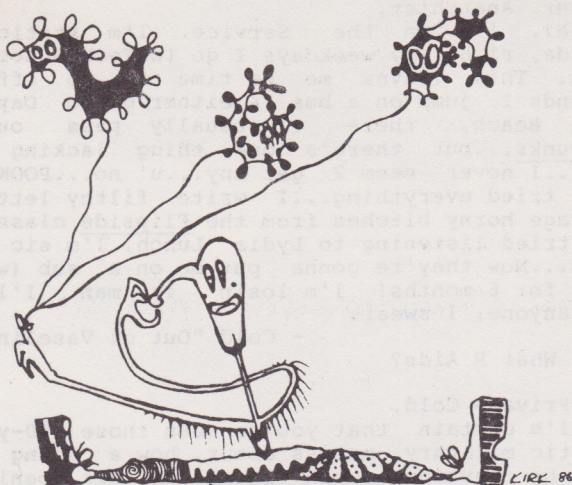
This isn't entirely true. "We want to tour Europe," jokes Toni Paruta. "We just don't to bother with a messy American tour in a lot of little clubs." In fact, it is Baumgartner's obsessive perfectionism (he is his own and his band's toughest critic), the band's own inclination to stage fright (O'Toole and Francia both strive for invisibility on stage), and their harried personal schedules (everyone works, and three members are married with children) that keeps them busy rehearsing but too busy to play many gigs.

10. Speed The Plough hate comparisons to Pink Floyd, King Crimson, or any other progressive band.

"I think what we're trying to do is really pretty original, so I can see why people might have a hard time describing it," says Baumgartner. Certainly, Speed The Plough is like no other local band. Their sound, like the Trypes, tends toward transcendental reveries, intricately woven melodies and hypnotizing rhythmic patterns. Band members play not only guitars, keyboards, and drums, but trumpet, flute, and saxophone. At the new lineup's debut performance at Maxwells, most of the audience sat on the floor, mesmerized, much as the crowd used to do for the Trypes. It is difficult to classify STP as "rock" and ridiculous to imagine them playing in a "dance club." Although, were they to do so, they would bring new meaning to the phrase, "trip the light fantastic."

Because that is what they do.

- Jim Testa



C

JERSEY BEAT

Confidential

DIARY OF A ROCKCRITTER

BIG STICK RECORD RELEASE PARTY
Genocide/Hades/Big Stick
Pyramid Club - August 31

Monday night, 10:35 p.m.: Arrive at Pyramid Club on Avenue A with free pass from Buy Our Records, which surprisingly gets me in the door without any hassles from doorman. Say hello to Jim Dunleavy, who soon disappears. Say hello to Dave A.O.D., who also disappears. Wave across the room to Lenny Sblendorio, who also disappears. I assume they have all gone downstairs to the V.I.P. Lounge to have fun. No one I know in the room. Buy a Rolling Rock. \$3.00. They're \$1.75 at Maxwells.

10:40 Say hello to Steve Blush, who climbs into dj booth to start playing heavy-metal records, none of which I recognize. Walk into main room to listen. Two gay men sit across from me and start to make out.

11:06 Wander back out to bar. Still no Jim, no Lenny, no Dave. Go back to main room. Three girls from Long Island have taken my seat. One of the gay guys is finishing my beer.

11:24 Reclaim seat when Long Island girls go to bar. Sam from P.E.D. arrives. I tell him I reviewed his EP for The Bob. He is ecstatic but doesn't offer to buy me a beer.

11:25 Notice room is filling up with variety of long-haired miscreants and enormous delegation from Court Tavern, here to see Genocide. Steve Blush plays 23rd consecutive heavy-metal song I've never heard before.

11:26 Remember I promised to look outside club for Jag Slab, who said he'd stop by. All Raging Slabs are barred from Pyramid due to slight, ummm, altercation with Pussy Galore at said establishment. Look out door and see it's raining. Go back inside.

11:31 Blush plays "Takin' Care Of Business" by BTO.

11:52 No sign of the band yet. Mykel Board says hello. Drunken Long Island girl spills drink on my brand-new sportcoat.

12:04 a.m. Genocide finally take the stage. Once a bad punk band, they are now a bad heavy metal band, still centered around the bad-boy shenanigans of lead singer Bobby Ebz, who I noticed has added a decidedly bi-sexual mince to his Poor Man's G.G. Allin routine. Ebz sings lyrics like "Live to Fuck, Fuck to Live!" then waits for his audience to be shocked. At the Pyramid, he might just as soon wait for a M13 bus to pull up and take him back to New Brunswick.

12:34 Club pulls plug on Genocide. Filing out of main room, overhear drunk Long Island girl tell boyfriend, "That was boring. He didn't even bleed!"

Continued on next page

BIG STICK
"Crack Attack" EP
Buy Our Records
Box 363, Vauxhall, NJ 07088
"If your mama's white and your daddy's black/you're most susceptible to a crack attack," goes the rap in the two mixes of "Crack Attack," Side 1 of this



EP by Big Stick. Layered in irony and smothered in cool, the nonchalant racism of the repeated refrain becomes one more gag line in Big Stick's running joke on the New Yawk Noise Scene. Aurally, there's nothing in either Version 1 or the "Remix" that adds anything to the lexicon of rap/dub/scratch; this is just the sort of thing that white college students can play on their alternative radio stations and feel "cool" about, the punk-rock fallout of the Reagan era: It's cool to come down on the coloreds again. Frankly, I don't need it. The flipside offers three varieties of Big Stick's aural shenanigans, from the dense noise/dub of "Billy Jack Paddy Wack" and "I'm Amazed" to the minimalist trance of "Friends & Cars." Neither will flip yer frightwig as high as their "Drag Racing" EP. Quoth Thoreau: Never trust any enterprise that requires new clothes. (See photo below, and sidebar for details of Big Stick's record release bash).

J.T.



BIG STICK



JERSEY BEAT

Confidential

Continued from previous page

12:46 Await Big Stick, who are supposed to be on next. Look around for Lenny, who promised me a free record. Big Stick are John Gill and Yanna Trance, talented conceptual artists whose "Drag Racing" 7-inch was nothing short of brilliant. Live, however, they are something of a hype, a sort of joke played on their audience, but with the best of intentions, like the films of Edward Wood - costumes, fright wigs, sound effects, fog machine, and a cacophony (most of it pre-recorded) of screech, bang, & yowl.

12:52 Lenny invites me downstairs to V.I.P. Lounge, which I find has been redecorated since my last visit (Gun Club, 1984) into a seedy barren storeroom. Find out Hades has to play next as a 3-piece suit from their label is here to see them and has to leave. As Big Stick has no equipment of their own, and Genocide's van has just pulled out for New Brunswick, John Gill hastily makes deal with Hades - Big Stick will switch spots and go on last if they can borrow bass amp and drumkit. Deal is struck. Lenny gives me my record.

1:02 Go back upstairs. See entire New Brunswick delegation has left.

1:04 Hades takes stage. They have very long hair and one of those singers who screeches in that heavy-metal falsetto that I regard with the same distaste as fingernails scraping across a blackboard. They are also louder than most people I know could possibly imagine.

1:12 3-piece suit from label leaves.

1:45 Hades finishes set after showering crowd with promotional flyers and free condoms. They promise their 2nd album will be out "sometime after Winter."

2:02 Hades reneges on deal with Big Stick, begins dismantling drumkit and bass head. John Gill frantically searches club for equipment.

Genocide at their best are just every 2-bit smut peddler's leather fantasy, but Big Stick, in full regalia, go beyond King and Cronenberg in conjuring up a vision of the truly horrid. Legends such as this should not be seen in mufti, esp. if, like John Gill, they look like John Candy in a baseball cap without their stage gear.

2:03 Leave club in steady rain.

2:11 Arrive at PATH station. No train.

2:45 Arrive at Hoboken. Still raining. No cabs.

3:04 Arrive home.

6:45 a.m. Alarm clock rings for work.

Dear Mr. Anarchist,

Hi. I'm in the Service. I'm stationed in Florida, right. My weekdays I go to Tech School for 8 hours. This leaves me no time to go off base. Weekends I jump on a bus & either go to Daytona or Cocoa Beach, there I usually pass out some TeenPunks...but there's one thing lacking in my life...I never seem 2 get any...u no...POONTANG!!! I've tried everything...I write filthy letters to underage horny bitches from the Flipside classifieds, I've tried listening to Lydia Lunch, I'm sic of G.G. Allin...Now they're gonna put me on a sub (with 180 guys) for 6 months! I'm losin' it, man. I'll do it with anyone, I swear.

- Cold "Out of Vaseline" Iron

P.S. What R Aids?

Dear Private Cold,

I'm certain that you've seen those 40-year old dramatic military movies about how a young recruit must be cautious when inserting his penis into anything that is not a cylinder in the sperm bank. They were worried about VD which came from sheep. Now we have AIDS, which we don't know where it came from or how to get rid of it. People worry: Is this the end of the human race? Well there is only one answer (and rubbers don't work so well)...celibacy! That's no more fucking for you & me. Yes, Mr. Righty and Mr. Lefty are fst becoming the #1 worldwide friends. With just a little bit of avocado on each palm and a dash of oregano, we get just the right feeling everybody wants. Fantasizing (or watching The Playboy Channel, if you have no imagination) while slowly moving up & down on a feather pillow can do wonders as well. Just remember your pink lady bra to strap around you and a Teddy Bear to kiss on the nose after the dam breaks. Private Cold-Iron, heed my words, if you value your life.

Love you,
Yosi

P.S. Aids R Us.

Yosi,

How does a pain-in-the-ass fuckhead like you get into a fanzine just to fry the shit out of people to inflate your own ego?

Give it up, Hymie,
THE REAL ANARCHIST

Dear #1 fan,

I will be on tour in your area later this Fall. Check local listings. Thank you,

Yosi



ask the anarchist

by Yosi Levin

Dear Mr. Anarchist,

I love you. I want to be you. I want to beat you til I can't take it nomore. Love me, please! Give me what any mortal would desire from a God like your. I can't wait forever! I need you now, Babe! Oh, just the thought of you reading this is making me tear and sweat. I can die for you. Just give me the word. Anything? Anyway you want? Love me love me love me.

I Love You

Dear Mom,

You've got to stop this hero worship. I'm your son. I've got too many people who do this kind of thing all the time. I can't take it from you. Let's just be friends, ok?

I love you too, Mom,
Your son,
Yosi

There is no small irony in the fact that one of the few bands in the Greater New York area with bright prospects and hefty financial backing from a well-established local label is exactly the sort of thing that would have been a Big hit 5 years ago.

James Dean haircuts. Black cowboy shirts with string ties under tuxedo jackets. Here come The Brandos, waiting for the Mystery Train to pull into the station one last time.

But if there's one fad that New York's moribund club scene'll never revive, it's the return of the Rockabilly Cats. So what are these guys thinking of?

[Answer: The Smithereens, I bet.]

Then you hear their music, and almost forget all about the hairdos & the duds. At first, all you hear is John Fogerty. Dave Kincaid, the band's lead voice, primary songsmith, and producer, does a better Fogerty than Mellencamp or Edmunds. Then you hear the music - muscular, engaging, surprisingly not overproduced, considering the dead aim these boys obviously have on the mainstream.

Two of the faces in this band are more than familiar. Veterans of Jersey units UXB and Soul Attack, bassist Ernie Mendillo and guitarist Ed Rupprecht hooked up with Seattle heartthrob Kincaid after Soul Attack self-destructed a few years ago. Drummer Larry Mason, another transplant from the Great Northwest, followed soon after.

At first, it was the usual grind: Writing, nursing, weening new songs. Too many mid-week gigs at nowhere hellholes like The Bitter End and Kenny's Castaways. A big fight with Steve Fallon over something or other meant no more Maxwells. It was not what you'd call a great beginning.

Things got better. A European tour. A NICE deal with Relativity, and the release of the band's first LP this fall.

Recorded at Mix-O-Lyidian, but mixed at The Power Station, Honor Among Thieves has both a solid AOR gloss and a homey, independent-label quality. The biggest problem is Kincaid's vocals, made "bigger" for the studio and too often full of Springsteen swagger and arena-rock pomposity. "Gettysburg," leaked to the press and radio in a pre-release cassette by the label, gives a good idea of the band's sound: Solid guitars, an earthy American theme developed thematically in the lyrics, not too much flash but just...enough.

Rupprecht brings to the band his fluid guitar leads, Mendillo his love of strong harmony vocals and, his great taste in covers. Kincaid looks like James Dean and sings like, yeah, John Fogerty. The drummer rocks.

The songs work well on vinyl and on stage, with tight harmony vocals and spare but effective riffing. There's a taste of rockabilly in those licks, to be sure, and a dash of Cajun pepper. Topped off by those Elvis haircuts. Not too bad. I won't be ready to jump on the "Creedence Of The 80's" bandwagon until these guys learn to pick up the tempo, though, 'cos the LP tends to drag. Not so the live set, and they've already paid enough dues and put together enough convincing songs to earn them at least one more ride on the Mystery Train. Where they go from there is up to them.

by Jim Testa



The Brandos: All Aboard For The Mystery Train

GENOCIDE

Submit To Genocide, LP New Renaissance

It's been a long time coming, but after over 5 years of abusing the public & themselves, the first full Genocide LP is finally unleashed. It's about fucking time. But it was well worth the wait. Genocide were & are the ultimate in sleaze, the lowest of low, the "Manson Youth" of today. Wearing the most far out death metal gear, they are not poseurs like the rest of the metal masquerade - they are the REAL thing!! Truly scary dude/lead vocalist Bobby Ebz looks & lives the most extreme/decadent rock 'n roll lifestyle. Each of the band's newsletters describes constant friction with the local police. Ebz and cohort Paul Decolator backed their buddy G.G. Allin at his one & only Philly gig with their once-ever unit, The Snuff Film Masturbators. Nice rep, right?? Since most of us didn't get a chance to see Iggy do his sick stage antics the first time around, it's just as shocking to see Ebz whip it out on stage or knife himself up there today. Not enough excitement in your lives? Just check out Genocide live!!

Oddly enough, even tho Ebz & Co. are decked out in their death metal best on the cover, this is one great punk disc! It really rocks with the best of them, right up there with bands that've influenced them the most - Stooges, Kiss, Motorhead, Dead Boys & Sex Pistols. Its finest moments reverberate with strong melodic power chords, which remind me of Genocide's buddies, Pleased Youth (no doubt influenced in turn by Genocide themselves). That spooky element, right out of Misfits Hell, has been pushed to its limit as well. Genocide's lyrics deal with the most depraved aspects of life & death. My first response is to laugh; these dudes can't be serious. Yet, in some way, they are. Dead serious. Society is a nightmare you can't just turn off. Genocide are not letting us forget. Where does one draw the line?? Just the right amount of speed blasting, slower sludge-rock sections, and even some catchy (alho demented) choruses to boot. This is one powerful platter. All you headbangers & real punks out there, take note: Submit to Genocide! And don't forget to "Die Wasted!!!!"

- Rockin' Rollo

Genocide

DEWITCHED, LP

Shove Records

Bewitched is mostly a solo project (with friends) for Bob Bert, who currently bangs metal for the ever-controversial Pussy Galore and who used to play drums for the amazingly popular Sonic Youth. Although the many layers of primitive-sounding drums stomp all over both sides, it is the mix by Clint Ruin & Roli Mosimann, the Wiseblood duo, that really takes control. Guest contributors include Sue Sasio, vocals, Marc Cunningham (from the group Mars) on trumpet, and Phantom Tollbooth's Dave Rick on guitar. They are used only in spurts. Monster guitarist Mr. Rick is reduced to an occasional feedback groan. Does it really matter to the overall scheme? Probably not, since the swirling sound effects & drums make up most of the brew. And a thick one at that.

I have an aunt who goes into fits of depression if she ingests any chocolate, so I can relate to the cover photo and piece, "Chocolate Frenzy." It is structured simply: A moderately-paced marching funk section, followed by a slow section, then back to that middle-paced groove. Mr. Bert's percussion at center has a very human, unforced quality. Sonically, this piece succeeds extremely well, with its panned-around-the-mix vocals and indistinct but cool instrumentation. An industrial stomp with creepy vox. "Swamp Shoot" is really long, almost twice as long as its stated time. Neat trick. The ultra-primitive drums bash slowly along, building bit by bit. The drums are echoed more & more, densely, until they become an immense wash of sound. Trumpet smears & frequent birdcalls pepper the stew, rather ENOesque. This fine line between inspired stomping and relentless pounding has been drawn. You choose...

RITUAL TENSION

"Hotel California," EP

Sacrifice Records

Box 488, New York, NY 10009

This is actually a classic moment in the history of rock music. Rarely has any band tortured & twisted a 70's rock standard to such extremes. The total antithesis of the spirit (that laid back, West Coast attitude) inherent in the tune, stripped to its barest essentials, anger oozing from every angle. String-strangler Andrew Nahem stretches bizarre sounds up & down that neck, like bugs crawling over naked bodies. Vocalist Ivan Nahem is a real natural; he sounds completely believable as a deranged human being doing his thing. The quartet have done a fine job of producing themselves, esp. the backing vocals, which exaggerate the tormented feelings from within. The rhythm team, no less powerful, is even more blunt. A totally harrowing experience, just as it should be. Then scream the word "NO!" a few times, loudly, get that adrenalin pumping! That's how "Hatred" starts off, to incredibly harsh accompaniment. Short & to the point, with Andrew's frightening guitar fragments, not easy to deal with. The daily grind. Sometimes it gets to ya. And when it does, well, that's what their 3rd & final & most disturbing tune, "The Grind," is all about. There's a parallel between the hypnotic demonic groove and the seductive security of our daily routine. "How does it feel to be...YOU?" they scream together accusingly. If I wasn't so tough, I'd have a hard time dealing with this disk.

- Bruce Gallanter

SHARKEY'S MACHINE

Let's Be Friends, LP

Shimmy Disc, JAF Box 1187, NYC 10116

A little too weird and diverse for HC, and too stubbornly untrendy for the Sonic Tollbooth Zombie Galore crew which currently rules downtown... what then to make of Sharkey's Machine (formerly Killdozer)? Their 2nd LP has all of the bone-snapping snarl & crunch of their debut, improved by cleaner production and crisper playing. The band still serves up a combination of blues-based hard rock, thrash, damaged country-western, loony covers, and acid-tinged distorto guitar, all guaranteed to pierce your skull like the psychotronic hero of Driller Killer. If Henry Rollins lived on Avenue C and took drugs...

- Jim T.

"You Axed For It" EP

171 3rd St. Jersey City, NJ 07307

Stealing a Mentors title...have you no shame? Then again, the Mentors are fucking poet laureates compared to these geniuses. This monster mosh trio show their vision and lyrical flexibility as they delve into daring and bold new themes never before covered in the punk world. Y'know, stuff like having a song about Charles Manson. There's another thing here whose only words are "This ain't no metal crap/this is hardcore!!" ...well, they ARE correct in claiming it's HARDKORRE and they're also right on da nose about it's not being metal. As for that other part, though...

psycho
sin

Jivin' And Twistin' LP

54 Courier Blvd., Kenmore, NY 12345

If a youngster band like this one (the old jaded fuck would wager 13-16 years) is gonna trek down such an unoriginal and familiar road such as

Route Mod/White Boy R&B, then their one saving grace would be in they were totally loud chaotic obnoxious punks just itchin' for their parents to take in a dinner/movie so they could break into the liquor cabinet and throw a kiddie house party where lotsa sickly brats would puke on the rug and these Big Little Shits of the teenage jetset would play and later score hordes of swooning groupie nubile afterwards. But these wheezers don't cut it, vocals & guitars are too tame and polished for what they should be aiming for. Future potential could be determined by a rumble with Bold.

ramrods

"Off The Board" Compilation

CBBG/Celluloid, LP

Probably somebody's swift idea of trying to make a point of the "variety" of music hosted at CBBG. What other ill-conceived reason could you point to for lining up bands like Damage and Ed Gein's Car next to such Tuesday night wonders like Jing, Rods And Cones, and Chemical Wedding (who ARE these bands? why do they exist? Why did someone record them?) The Ed Gein's Car stuff, altho sub-standard, is the best of the lot, but it's pretty disposale. Off The Board..and into the garbage can! Wheee!

by Joker Schwartz

Will To Live

AMOR FATI & VANDAL X
Against Nature, LP
Flesh Records, Box 5040
Nor. Bergen, NJ 07047

We are all disenchanted with different aspects of life, and many of the institutions we were taught to believe in - family, school, jobs, and esp. our greedy country - are not as dependable as we once hoped. There is a well-masked but inevitable sense of insecurity that plagues mankind more & more. This fear is very real; yet we often try to cover it up. There are a few groups and composers that really have opened up, recognized, and explored this deep fear. Note the Buttholes recent tactics. A year in the making, Against Nature finds Amor Fati teaming up with Vandal X for an unquestionably seductive & riveting explosion of terror...a confrontation with our darker side. With scalpels in hand, they dissect humanity, showing things as they really are. A definite continuation and maturation of the ideas/music that filled Amauri's universally acclaimed first LP of last year, this new album refines his techniques, from the superb, thick production to the hazy blue/grey acupunctured female bodies floating in the heavens, a crucifix in hand, who adorn the cover. There are a couple of surprises thrown in, like the serious (?) deconstruction of Tom Petty's "American Girl." Swimming toward the distant yet recognizable melody, this version invokes the droning of soft dark spirits (haunting guitar scrapings, actually), with tribal/rocking/pounding tom toms at the heart - imminent, grave, suggestive...real, yet surreal. Most disorienting.

Equally unexpected, but from the other end of the structural spectrum, is the dynamic title piece, "Against Nature." This piece could easily pass for some brilliant free-floating Euro avant jazz!! If this is, in fact, a solo piece, then Amauri's amazing drumming is yet another force to be reckoned with, as well as his distinctive guitar torturings & classic ghost-like last-breath vocals. The acoustic piano hypnotizes with its soothing pulse, while extrapolating the landscape. The drums pound full throttle, like man abusing nature. Radio waves desperately try to creep into the sides of the horizon. Humanity is gasping for air, polluted in various ways. That pulse is circular, and somehow provides hope.

Will To Live are/were always extremists, both musically as well as visually. In "Go Under," the duo of Amauri and Vandal X have learned how to smooth out much of that sound, yet still retain its feeling. The percussion, a primitive throb not unlike the Buttholes', contains the clunking of various metals. The title is the last command you will hear before you drown...

"A Million Arms won't hold me down" whispers/screams Amauri throughout "Million Arms," with them Big Black-like thundering drums & stomping piano. Static guitar haze suspends us, as a disembodied spirit speaks to us. Violent, yet captivating. Many of us civilized, sensitive beings view ourselves more as victims than those who abuse others. How would it feel to be the abuser for a change? Amauri portrays this rough/sad character in "Little Man."

A relentless primal drum riff holds us down, as the vocalist tells us how he can make our lives miserable, in a tone more bent than ever. Occasionally this voice is surrounded by the displaced voices of whining children & wives. Sounds like more fun, right?

"No Turns," a funereal death dirge, really gets under the skin, with more effective piano sprinkling to contrast the painful transmission. The anguish drains us as lethargy sets in. Limer note philosophy is here in abundance (Ionesco, Camus, Nietzsche...)

"The Family is guilt." Ponder that while an audial explosion smashes your pain. Like a mutant religious ritual, complete with droning violin and chanted background voices. Amauri, with a voice thousands of years old, gives the final prayer for planet Earth. Toward the end, the moderately tense tempo doubles, the adrenalin jumps as the mechanical heartbeat thunder grips us. Superb use of a drum machine, pounding out that fat hypnotic pulse on "Under Breath." An informed dj might make use of this happening rhythm. There is some strange female operatic vocal altered nicely in the background. Amauri tells us, "Certain thoughts must be kept...under breath." No doubt this duo continues to uncover thoughts and feelings that many of us may wish not to deal with. This music is very challenging and draining. You and I will never be the same after checking it out. So do it.

- Bruce Lee Gallanter



SACRED DENIAL
North Of The Order, LP
Forefront Records
 280 Fairmount Ave. Chatham NJ 07928

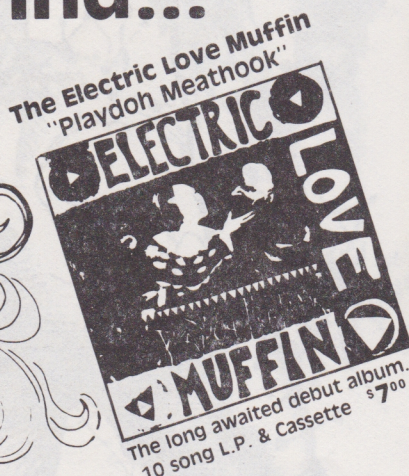
With a new lineup and a renewed purpose, Sacred Denial return with their third LP. It's an impressive package of punk-rock showcasing the lively and eclectic range of the band's guitarist/keyboardist and main songwriter, Mike Guido, one of the Garden State's most overlooked and underrated talents. From the crunchy power-chord punk of Side 1's opener, "Where's My Mom?," to the ambitious blend of thrash and prog-rock (Derek & The Dominos Meets A.O.D.?) that ends Side 2, this LP is a constant surprise - esp. if, like most, you think of Sacred Denial as "just another hardcore band." Not that these guys can't blister the graffiti right off CBGB's walls when they want to; there's more than enough mosh to go around on the disk. It's just that this band can do so much more. "The Name of Life," with its descending chords and contrapuntal bass, is pure R.E.M. pop, with a shimmering spirituality that also recalls U2. "Groovy" explodes in a rainbow of psychedelic colors, not unlike the faster-tempoed tunes of fellow Jerseyan's Lord John. There are other influences galore on display throughout these 11 compositions - Kiss, Pink Floyd, Replacements, King Crimson, to name a few. Bottom line: There isn't a pigeonhole big enough in Criticism to contain this band. And it'll be exciting to see if the new lineup - Ken Seely joining on bass, Ant moving to 2nd guitar, and Basil Last replacing Janus on vocals - can make these songs come alive on a stage.

- Jim Testa

Sacred Denial



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PAGAN BABIES

"Immaculate Conception" 7" EP

Positive Force, Box 9184, Reno, NV

Unlike most recent signings on Positive Force, Philly's Pagan Babies are more than just 7 Seconds clones. For one thing, they obviously listen to a lot more than just other hardcore. And they're lyrics go way beyond the "Be straight/lift weights" positive dogma of the NYC/HC crew. From the cover of Slaughter & The Dogs' "The Bitch" to the psychedelic visions and Kiss-like crunch of "Dreams," Pagan Babies strike a blow for originality. Ok, sure, there are some positive lyrics here, but at least the Pagan's straight-edge message isn't "I don't drink/you shouldn't either" but "God, I gotta stop," in "Clearing The Blur." Singer Mike McManus gets credit for the lyrics (a free thinker with facial hair, wow!), while Bruce Boyd and Mark Pingitore (drums & bass) handle the throttling rhythm section. My only beef is that while the band has two guitarists (McGinnis & Squadroni), you rarely hear two distinct guitar parts going off at the same time. Otherwise, a great debut; hope they get a 12" soon.

- Jim T.

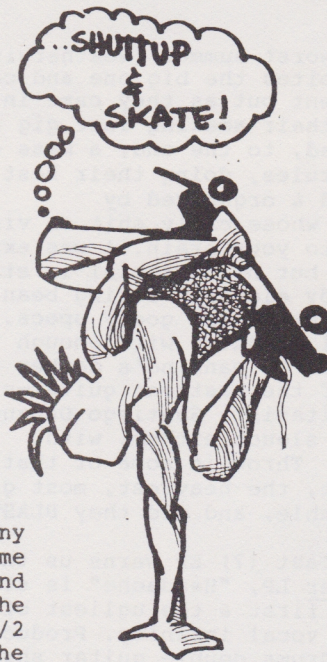
4 BANDS THAT COULD CHANGE THE WORLD

Gasatanka

Old & live stuff from 7 Seconds that rocks, funny unreleased punk/thrash from White Flag, some impressive rockin' nonsense from Florida's F, and finally, a great vinyl version of "Anarchy In The UK" by Adrenalin O.D. Each band contributes 1/2 side, everything here rocks, and while none of the bands may change the world, they certainly won't do any harm to your record collection.

- Jim T.

PAGAN BABIES



TOKEN ENTRY

From Beneath The Streets, LP
Positive Force

I must have listened to the advance tape of this LP 20 times, then I bought the album and listened to it some more. I still can't really decide whether or not I think it's as good as it could be. The songs themselves are great, about time they were put on vinyl. It's just not done well. The recording is too clean, except for some vocal parts. Don't get me wrong, this is a good album and I recommend it, because Token Entry are some of the most hard-working and honest guys around.

I always felt Token Entry was one of the most original of NYC's hardcore bands. Go see them live, listen to the record, and judge for yourself. I was disappointed.

- Dave Koenig

STRAIGHT AHEAD

"Straight Ahead" 12" EP

Irisk, & Some Records, 210 E. 6th.
New York, NY 10003

NYC HARDCORE 1987 - TOGETHER Comp
Revelation, Box 1454, New Haven, CT

Where the personality of NYC Hardcore was once a surly pit bull with mange, it's now a boyscout in braces & boots helping a little old lady across the street. While I appreciated the decline in violence that this new breed of positive-punk skinheadism has engendered, I can't say things have improved much musically. NYC/HC has always lagged behind D.C., Boston, and L.A., and for the most part, today's crew of young skin bands are little more than 2nd Generation Minor Threats. Very minor. The generic sound of fuzz guitar, thudding drums, and rapid-fire drums that is thrash has become a dead end, as new bands imitate old bands and everyone winds up sounding the same. Straight Ahead's debut EP goes whole hog for this approach, with "positive" lyrics throughout: lines like "live and let live," "stop the violence," and "look deep inside you & try to find a caring person in a positive state of mind." I'm positive I don't want to hear anymore of this Norman Vincent Skinhead philosophy for a while. Revelation Records' 7 band, 7-inch compilation, "Together," gives us more of the same sentiments, all set to the same beat and basic sound: War Zone wants us "united as one," Gorilla Biscuits complain about "negativity/no unity," Bold argues "Talk is cheap," Side By Side has a song against violence (God, the courage of these kids!), and the gods of the current crew, Youth of Today, get totally original, with a song about togetherness. (So why do they have a different rhythm section every time you see them?) All of this leads to the conclusion that children should be a scene, and not heard.

- Jim T

REST IN PIECES

My Rage, LP

One Step Ahead Records

Well, I was a big RIP fan, but this record turned me around. One word describes this record: HARD. This is some of the HARDEST music to come out of NYC in a while. "My Rage" is definitely one of the best of 1987. The lyrics deal with a lot of personal problems, social issues, and hate. "My Rage" is a good title for it. Please get this record, you won't be sorry.

- Dave Koenig

by Bruce Gallanter

BIG BLACK

"Headache" 12" EP, Touch & Go

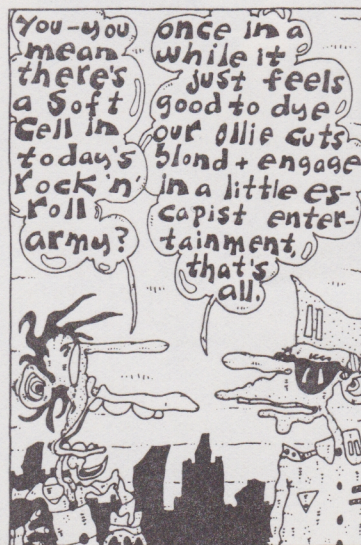
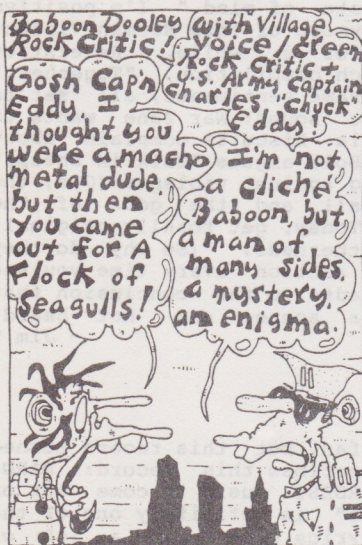
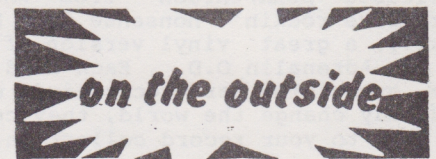
Life sucks! In the midst of the worst summer (weatherwise) I can ever remember, Big Fucking Black bites the big one and calls it a day. What could be worse? They went out as they came in - triumphant, both on vinyl and at their amazing last gig at the Cat Club in early August. The remained, to the end, a mass of contradictions, making their own rules, doing their best to scare/confound their audience. Led & organized by acid-tongued/penned Steve Albini, whose early shit on vinyl was enough to put that dentist drill to your brain. I was expecting Big Black to be big, nasty dudes, but no... Albini is still dangerous-lookin' enough as a nerdy electric string bean, an intellectual punk complete with crewcut and goofy specs. While Albini spewed forth endless verbal assaults with enough venom to make even the most jaded punks sick of mankind's darker side, he also fried our brains with some of the nastiest guitar-slashing abrasiveness known. His other guitarist, Santiago Durango, now off to law school (!?!), ain't no slouch either, with fire-breathing power chord storm. Throw in some of that thick throttling bass &, without a doubt, the heaviest, most gripping drum machine-pounding ever imaginable, and did they BLAST live!!!! Whoa!!!!

Although a sticker on the band's last (?) EP warns us that this 12" is not as hot as their Atomizer LP, "Headache" is still extremely powerful. "My Disco" is first & the ugliest of them all. Incredibly painful super-distorto vocal insanity. Production at its rawest, with sandpaper-to-eardrums double guitar shredding. Drum machine controlling the overall robotic propulsion.

There are two things that really set this unit apart - one is the unique double-guitar groan & blend that wails and blurs on top while (two) there is often this super-melodic undertow that catches us offguard, yet pulls us in anyway with quite memorable riffs. This contradiction is most exemplified in "Grinder," a most suitable title. You can bathe in that well of sound strumming, as Albini screams, "You will not touch my tool!" You better believe it.

Most unexpected of all is the slowed sad/beautiful melodramatic intro to "Ready Men;" could it be that these dudes actually have hearts? Victorious, almost Clash-like guitar harmonies. Symphonic density. Distinctive 6-string drone/buzz and haunting howling. Bow down & pray to the king of the detectives - "King Dick." The subtle blend of distant TV detective-theme music with thick, slashing and ringing notes. Although there is no distortion on Steve's voice here, he can bellow with the best of 'em on this track, psychotic-sounding as they come. The tune ends with Steve exclaiming, "I'M PETE!" Are these dudes for real? I'm confused but impressed as well.

**big black
bites the
big one -
bye bye!!**



"Third Beat From The Sun" Compilation Cassette
Birdopray, PO Box 39, Trenton, NJ 08601

Birdopray has released about a dozen cassettes in the past dozen, and this is their third compilation. Of the 14 selections here, only 2 have been previously released. The personnel consists of various groupings of members of Scornflakes (who are no longer) with their friends, plus other Birdopray giants like SMERSH, Thom, Ween, and even the unknown Scott Free. Most of the pieces are by trios or smaller units, and all are most interesting & often mysterious-sounding.

We get four different solo selections: from Jeffy's strong synth eruption splashes, to the Droid's mixture of somber reptile ritualistic el. drums & subtle synth splashes, his melodic use of the drum machine venturing into an area not yet fully explored; Andrew Weiss' tribute to session guitarist Vinnie Bell, shows a much different side to this usually throttling bass wonder - here he combines groovy but cheesy organ swirlings; Thom, who has numerous tapes out despite his young age, is generally more positive in his electronic realizations. Here he takes us on a cryptic subway ride through hell on "Concourse D," with its controlling mechanical groove, melting screaming vocals (...but why?!!), a nightmarish landscape of technological overload which is mentally claustrophobic. Overall this tape has a nice balance - dark and light passages, with both serious and humorous aspects as well. There are 4 duos included on this comp: Partners-In-Wonder feature a mean ogre-voice and cheesy keyboards ditty, while the youngest unit, the recently defunct Ween, antagonizes all of us with a nasty tantrum of vocals/guitar/drum rudeness & hystronics, infinitely more obnoxious than the all-too-popular Beastie Boys. Elder statesmen of the NJ noise scene, SMERSH, with over a dozen tapes of their own out, also show a different side to their usually more warped style. They take some incredibly lame disco toon (possibly Madonna?) and completely bury it in the mix, letting it rarely bleed through, while pounding out the groove on a relentless drum machine. If the Martians ever attempt to recreate some silly 80's funk nonsense, this is what it might sound like. The final duo, Shred (Andrew & Billy Tucker), are the most extreme, their beat the toughest. Billy's vocals are the nastiest this side of Foetus, while Andrew pulls off another surprise of a completely bizarre distorted guitar solo - too sick to believe! Gripping, but deadly!

The two previously released tunes by Partnersin-Funk and Funkaphobia should by all rights get them a gig opening for those college radio crowd gods of haircut heaven, the mope-rock units like the Cure or Siouxsie. Best of luck, guys.

Scott Free's trio with Andrew and the guitarist from the Fusionaires, on the other hand, should get him an offer to do some more positive sounding film music, with somber samba cool groove, rather catchy guitar. Well done. Going beyond the trio format, we have the Fusionaires, a fine quartet that drummer extraordinaire Sim Cain plays with when not on the road with Gone or Henry Rollins. I have yet to see them live or check out their recent LP, but now I am most intrigued. Their contribution here shows some superb playing, more relaxed than any of Sim's other projects. The subtle shifting of winds, fine soprano sax, exquisite guitar, and excellent effortlessly smooth fretless bass, make this a superb mix.

Another odd choice/special treat is the Regressive Aid personnel plus, doing their tribute to Pink Floyd. As could well be expected, the strongest and sickest piece on this comp is an unreleased live Scornflakes segment entitled "Jah Will Pay The Bill." Massive, ugly, destroying entire civilizations throughout the entire mess. The brain toasting vocal insanity of Boy White is even more bent than usual. The thick elephant-like locked-in rhythm team beating us into submission, a hurricane-like force, while Billy's sinister spirit guitar strangulation sears & howls like no one else can do...making us sadly lament the loss of this very special unit. The world will never be the same...

A very strong compilation, most worthy of your attention.

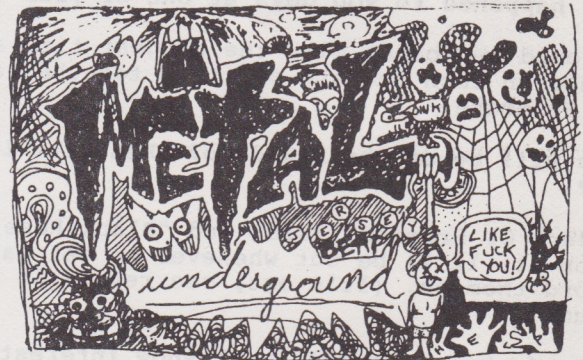
- Bruce Lee Gallanter

CASTLE KEEP
"A Taste Of..." Cassette
Box 878, No. Arlington, NJ 07032

Castle Keep is a duo from North Arlington that plays traditional folk music of England and Ireland in the tradition of Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, and Pentangle. On their debut 4-song tape, "A Taste Of...", they perform ancient ballads with a modern touch. Jodee James (vocals, guitars, and dulcimer), former lead singer with Pavlov & The Drooling Dogs and Rotterdam, interprets these ballads with an emotional intensity that is the focal point of this tape. Accompanying him is Jake Conte (bass, mandolin, guitar, and flute), who played with the electric Celtic band, The Clan. His bass playing is the anchor for Jodee's voice and guitar. Guest musician is recording engineer Andrew Bellware, who provides a sparse (but important) electronic drum beat on the first & last songs, "Cloudy Banks" and "High Germany." These and "The Blacksmith" and "Paddy's Green Shamrock Shore" tell stories, like oral newspapers of the past. This 16-minute tape is a great package, complete with a gatefold cover and full-size, 4-page booklet (printed on parchment stock) that includes all of the lyrics and musical sources. My only complaints are that the tape is recorded at too low a volume and it is too short.

Castle Keep performs extensively at NY and NJ coffeehouses, colleges, fairs, and festivals.

- Steve X. Dream



WITH: **MIKE RIELLO**

NUCLEAR ASSAULT - THE ASSAULT LP

Combat Records

If you buy albums by the cover art, than this is the best you can own. The artwork is incredible. But so is the music inside, the best NA has offered yet. Guitars are louder than on previous releases and John Connell's voice sounds better than ever (he's gone from good to exceptional), keeping that original sound. "Game Over" is the best instrumental I've heard since Rush's "Overture." "Butt Fuck," about Crue's Vince Neil and his little driving mishap, is hilarious, and the rest of the songs are merely great.

TOKEN ENTRY

From Beneath The Streets LP

(Positive Force Records)

If you waited as long as I have, then you already have this record. If not, listen up! Original sound, good music, the production is good but could be better, good lyrics...all in all, a fun record, some of the best NYHC around. Thumbs up!

KIDD GLOVES

"Feel The Fire"

As far as female heavy-metal singers go, I'm pretty prejudiced. Not because of sex, just because I haven't found one with a good voice...thought Lisa St. Ann of Kidd Gloves is one of the better femme vocalists in a while. The only good song of these four is the title track, the others are just typical and their cover of Blondie's "Call Me" is just short of a joke. Recently the band "fired" Lisa St. Ann so I don't see them going anywhere soon.

PO Box 3413

Teaneck, NJ 07666

BLACKWELL - Demo

This latest tape from these North Joisey boys just don't do them justice. The problem is that after a long day of recording, they fell asleep during the mix, and the engineer screwed this up bad. The drums are too high and overly distorted. All but on "Breach Of Promise," where he came to his senses and the mix is a little better. Look for the band to release a record on their own label soon.

PO Box 110092

Nutley, NJ 07110

Blackwell

THE JERSEY BEAT INTERVIEW

First of all, where did you get the name Blackwell?

One night, Boner (bass player) walked into the place where we rehearse and said, "Fuck this, the name of the band is Blackwell!" And we said, "Sure, what the hell."

How many shows have you played, and where?

Approximately 1 million shows, give or take a few hundred thousand.

Which performance was your favorite?

The show we did in Iraq, at The Turban Head Saloon.

What would you say was the craziest thing that ever happened to you guys at one of your shows?

We found two babes with the biggest tits and drew a face on each one and put them together and made Mt. Rushmore.

What will be on the new demo? When will it be out?

"Breach Of Promise" (sic) and "Black Rose" will be on it. It'll be out whenever we get tapes to record them on. (It's out, see review in Metal column).

Have you had a record label show interest in you yet?

Yeah.

What countries will you visit on your World Tour? It's rumored you start in Zimbabwe and then jet over to Iraq.

Yeah, it's gonna start in Zimbabwe and then we're gonna canoe over to Iraq through the Straits of Hormuz and top it off by playing the Khaddafi Trust Concert.

What kinds of music have influenced Blackwell?

Cavemen beating on bones and flapping their boners in caves.

If you could get worldwide fame and fortune by wearing makeup and looking like cheese weenies, would you do it?

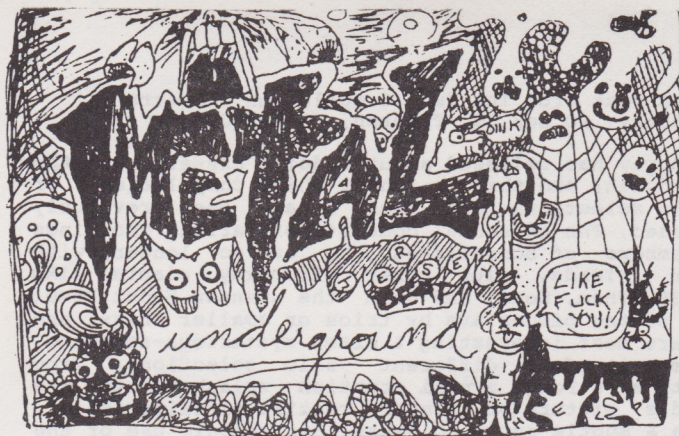
No, I'd rather get my dick chopped off than look like I want it in the ass. Besides, Mike the drummer looks bad in a G-string.

What is set for the future of Blackwell?

Banging 12-year old girls, massive beer consumption, then finally jail.

How many bones in a squirrel (average size)?

I don't know. We eat them too fast to count.



WITH: **MIKE NIELLO**

HATRED - Demo

Yeah, well...I know I said their last tape would get them signed, but things happen. Like the addition of a second guitarist, in the shape & form of Mr. Dan Spino. Now when a band does something to improve their sound, it only makes sense to make a new demo. "Dig Your Own Grave" is one for Tipper Gore to choke on. Or how about "Break The Glass," an anti-cocaine song? This tape would upset her world because Hatred breaks away from the stereotype of heavy-metal - clean, drug-free teens, 3 H.S. grads & two seniors, 4 out of 5 with jobs (soon to be 5 out of 5). PMRC should meet these guys and you should write them at:

79 Mitchell St.

West Orange, NJ 07052

(Look for Hatred on Complete Death Part II on Death Records soon.)

E.X.E. - "Stricken By Might"

(Shatter Records)

"In this world, there's no justice."

- Nuclear Assault, 1987

I use that quote for one reason: A band as bad as EXE should not be on an even halfway decent label. They do have some talent, I mean, they did a great job of ripping off Slayer and old Raven. But as for originality...hey, that just don't happen here. Just look at the back cover - they all look like assholes.

My final question - Why?

AMERICAN STANDARD - Demo

I really wish there were more bands like this around today. Nothing but true straightforward hardcore. The influence is obviously Minor Threat but they are not a Threat ripoff. In fact they don't sound much like the Threat at all. Sorry, no address available for one of the best NJ quartets around today.

THRASH METAL ATTACK - COMPILATION LP

New Renaissance Records

A lot of bands who could soon be God on this compilation, but for now only Blood Feast's "Menacing Thunder" is worth having. Same version as on their demo, though.

SPEED METAL HELL III - COMPILATION

New Renaissance Records

One of Ann Boleyn's better comps. The best two bands are definitely locals Prong and Blood Feast. Other good to ok stuff includes Necropolis (from L.A., not Pittsburgh), Necrophagia, Papsmeat, Metal Onslaught, and Wehrmacht.

TOGETHER - NEW YORK CITY HARDCORE 87

Revelation Records 7" compilation

One of the finest NY/HC comps ever. All songs are either really good or better, with Sick Of It All, Bold, and Supertouch the standouts. Plus goodies from Warzone, Gorilla Biscuits, Side By Side, and Youth Of Today. Get it now.

CHRONIC FEAR

"Resolutions" Demo

If you like New Joisey hardcore, you know the name. Whether you respect or like them is another story. Their first tape was a little rough; the second was better but left room to improve. And on "Resolutions," their third, new members Pete & Abbot (guitar) and John (bass) along with originals Tom (drums) and Eric (vocals) redeem the Chronic Fear name. The new songs are good and the new version of "Bad Relations" is better. Why? Because the production & the musicianship are better, and Eric's vocals are clearer & less drowned out. If I were you, I'd get a copy.

155 Reservoir Ave.

Boonton, NJ 07005

SPORADIC DROOLINGS

PO Box 1092, Kearny, NJ 07032

#7 \$1.50

While it's been quite some time since the last Droolings, editor Dave comes back strong, with more pages (112!) and easier-to-read type, plus the same obsessive tonnage of record, fanzine, and tape reviews. Interviews this time include the Wipers, Raunchettes, and Moving Targets. One of the best.

DANGEROUS RHYTHMS

% Gene Temesey

439 Rivercrest Dr. Piscataway NJ 08854 #8 99 cents

Nick Cave & Lydia Lunch on the cover? Is this DR's push to be the new Forced Exposure? Nah. Same groovy rambunctious free-wheeling coverage of New Brunswick & environs on the inside, plus a healthy dose of extra stuff, lotsa nice photos, & a touch of camp with Divine. A must-get.

BULLSHIT MONTHLY

89-58 215 Place

Queens Village, NY 11427 #15 \$.50

"Back From The Grave" issue, same unreadable Mike Riot handwriting that'll have you seeing spots before you finish catching up on Reagan Youth, Prong, APPLE, FCC, plus Misfits poster.

VAR TUFA

617 Foothill Blvd. #126

Upland, CA 91786

Newsprint tabloid, wonderfully anarchic layout & content will make you dizzy. No price listed but certainly worth a buck.

DAGGER

% Tim Hinely, 201 Frances Ave.

Linwood, NJ 08221 \$.25 #3

Gigs, zines, records, and interviews crammed into 1/2 size format, lots of pages for two bits and good reading. Could use a bit more artwork, though...

PERPETRATOR

% Nori Negron, 21 Wadsworth Ave.

NY, NY 10033 Free Summer '87

Couldn't figure out how anyone could give away a zine with this quality printing until I heard that it's some kind of college project. This ish dedicated to Lower East Side HC Crew, with all the regulars (Youth of Today, Side By Side, WarZone), a feature on tattoos, plus an ironic editorial by Charley Hankins on "cleaning up the HC scene" (yes, written by the same goon who beat the shit out of Ted Gottfried and Nancy Breslow at Irving Plaza).

OK GO NOW #2

Box 3007, Providence, RI 02906

Smalltown mentality provides boring look at "new wave music," written in that very "professional" style unique to journalism students and East Coast Rocker. Expensive production but the layouts look like they were done by baboons with rulers. If this is really the work of journalism students, maybe they were.

NOTHING BUT RECORD REVIEWS

% Mykel Board, 75 Bleecker St.

New York NY 10012 #2 \$1

Just what it says, all by Mykel Board, who doesn't believe in the concept of "bad" records or tapes - just some you'll like and some you won't (and lots you'll never hear about anywhere else).

ZINE
REVIEWS

zines

X-CLAIM

% Chuck Miller, 101 E. Wilmont Ave. Somers Pt., NJ 08244 #2 50 cents
Very much like the now-defunct Faith, this So. Jersey-based zine includes lists of names & addresses of bands & zines from the area, plus wider-ranging interviews with HC bands. Imaginative low-tech layout and nice repro, altho no photos, just drawings. Very generous size for 50 cents.

THE KVINDE HATER KLUB

% Herb Jue, 144 Hester #8, NYC 10013

#3 15 cents

6 handwritten pages in tiny block print record Herb's visits to clubs, latest additions to his record collection, and there's even a mini-interview with Wednesday Week. If you don't go blind trying to read it, a pleasant ramble through the mind of someone who truly loves rock and roll.

BROUHHA

Box 152, Honolulu, HI 96810 #5 Free

Query: Should a fanzine from Hawaii be somehow "Hawaiian"? cos this ain't. Paste-up art, short fiction, cartoons, some reviews, #5 has a "desert island" section where folks pick their most indispensable records (editors names are not given, however, so you don't know who actually publishes this). I get mine as a trade; even though it says \$0.00 on the cover, I'd send at least \$1.50 to cover postage & such. A hefty read on heavy stock, too, and different enough to be worthwhile.

LOWLIFE

% Glen Thrasher, 1095 Blue Ridge Ave

Apt 2, Atlanta, GA 30306 #11 \$2.00

Weird mix of letters & reviews (zines, gigs, records) written with a certain Cosloy-esque bite, followed by many pages of dada art, fiction, and cartoon strips. A hefty read, even for \$2, and some unusual stuff, like intv'w with "The Peek Sisters," which is apparently a spoof (but given what you can find in Georgia, maybe not). Try it.

YIPES!

9911 Goff St., Temperance MI 48182

50 cents

When Ken C. interviews a band (in this issue, the Rhythm Pigs), the questions tend to be a bit blunt; like, "How much did you get paid tonight?" and "Smoke any good dope lately?" Both of which get answered. Plus some leftist politics, reviews, more intvws. Not much to look at but a steal at 50 c.

PHFUDD!

% Chris S., 714 Shady Ave., Sharon PA 16146 #8 \$2.00

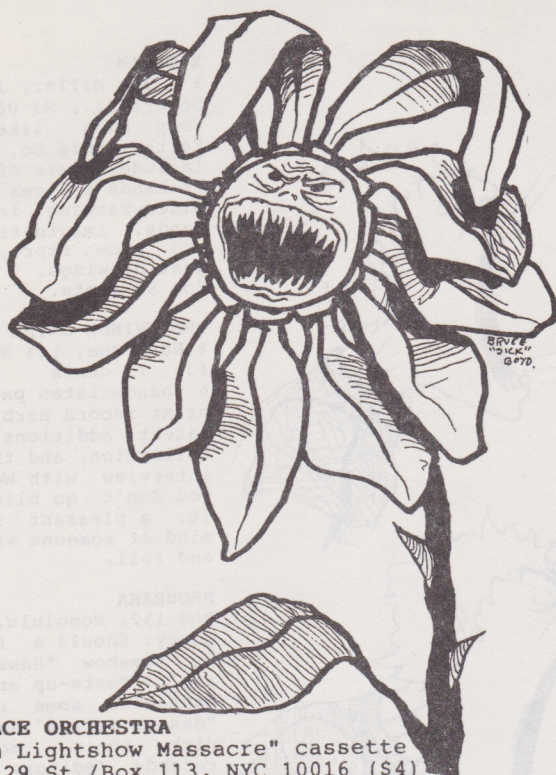
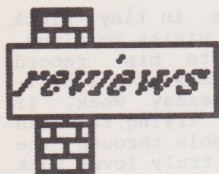
A bit pricey at \$2 given the size (and who forgot to put the name of the zine on the cover, Chris?), but worth it for the shoot-from-the-hip, lucid but not nasty reviews, plus lots of 70's droolings (a specialty of this zine), including essays on early 70's punk and a big spread on the late Peter Laughner. Distinctive and an original.

NO IDEA

3925 S.W. 3rd Ave. Gainesville FL

32607 #4 \$1.00

Big offset zine for a buck, similar in style & layout to XXX or Suburban Voice, with mostly hardcore. The best Dag Nasty intv'w I've seen (of the 237 printed recently) and not all hardcore either. Definitely a good 'un.



THE ELECTRIC PEACE ORCHESTRA

"Avalon Ballroom Lightshow Massacre" cassette
X Dream, 231 E. 29 St./Box 113, NYC 10016 (\$4)
A new kind of group therapy. While many of you were out tanning this last summer, I'd shlep out to Merrick, Long Island almost every Sunday to jam. Organized by former Dissipated Face drummer Steve X. Dream, and featuring a cast of 18 different participants throughout the season, these jams included luminaries like Kurt Ralske (Crash...), Ted Goldberg (WKCR), Bill Milkowski (Downbeat), and Steve Buchanan (triple threat alto/guitar/dance master). Each jam was/is a journey, uncovering various directions, distractions, and occasional surprises. Both player & listener must learn to be patient, since each trip consists of a slow process. Those truly transcendent moments really stand out. Since anyone, musician or not, is invited to join in, anyone with the spirit can change the direction of the music. It doesn't always connect...but when it does, jump in & swim. This cassette is some of the better moments from those Sunday jams. Included here are none of the above except Buchanan, with Mitch Hiller (keyboard wiz), Matt & Ed Michael (guitar), an Howie Bender (bass) joining in. Buchanan did a nice job of editing down these lengthy jams, yet many are still real long, yet mostly interesting. The simple 2-track production actually sounds just right, in a real stereo direction. Intended to be like a soundtrack for a psychedelic happening, these dudes are not far off. Ever so slowly expanding & spiraling, cosmic sailing not unlike a Dead jam. Guitars shimmer and tell distant stories in "Electric Peace," the groove falling somewhere between jazz & rock. The delightful peacefulness of "Super Colliding" builds gracefully & has that hypnotic Indian drone at the center. Burn the incense, everything is so groovy. Sampled foghorn & restrained tension. Purity hovers. The best cut by far is the 29-minute epic, "The Lightshow Massacre;" nothing short of amazing throughout. There is this great melodic bass figure that is the center. What's neat is how the whole thing evolves. What begins with a smoking rock groove slowly melts into a blues/jazz thing, which later gets pretty funky, and in the end gets back to a wailing rock groove. Meanwhile the density of the piece continually rises and falls like hills and valleys in our trip. Incredible soloing from both Mitch on synth and Matt on lead guitar. Totally swept away. Not very much different from the space journeys of Sun Ra, Miles, Gong, or even the Dead. Send for a copy of this wild tape, just in time for your next freakout.

- Bruce Lee Gallanter

LEMONHEADS

Hate Your Friends, LP
Taang, Box 51, Auburndale, MA 02166
When I finally caught this young Boson combo live, my first thought was that they aren't nearly as cute as they've obviously been told. Still, they've got four or five potent, catchy numbers here, the best sung in tandem by guitarists Evan and Ben. If they aren't quite as mind-blowing as Squirrel Bait or as revelatory as Moving Targets, remember, they're young yet. And at least these guys won't break up to go to college. Judge them by "Second Chance," "Hate Your Friends," or "Fucked Up," their best songs, and you'll agree they've got a very promising future.

- Jim T.

MY DAD IS DEAD

Peace, Love & Murder, LP
Birth Records

Box 101, Boston, MA 02134

There's something about this LP that bugs the shit out of me. Could it be the disorienting drum beats (programs)? or maybe the annoying, droning, spoken vocals? Or perhaps the grungy repetitive guitars? I know! It's the fact that none of the songs are distinguishable, and that this is 100% better than My Dad Is Dead's first LP! Ya see, there's this guy named Mark Edwards, and he plays all the instruments for MDID, and all in all, he does play very well. He just doesn't play anything I wanna hear.

- John L.

ZOOZGZ RIFT

Water, LP

SST

Totally dementoid blurt-fart-bleep "rock." Sorta like Beefheart gone haywire among synthesizers, sampling keyboards, and drum machines. Most of the tunes w/lyrics are sick, curses-galore, tuned out nonsense which can only be expected from Zoogz. The many instrumentals are super-abrupt, quirky, jerky, fresh, clear, synthy solid gold. Select tunes are "I'll Rip Your Brains Out," "Getting Laid At Grace Park," and "Mongoloid Middle America." Sickness, in short.

- John L.

BLIND IDIOT GOD

Same, LP

SST

Very good riffs but definitely overused. Really talented players but unfortunately the songs are too long. Blind Idiot God have their good & bad points...yet another SST instrumental band, this time in the vein of Gone, a very hard-rocking trio who came up with some extraordinary tempo changes, even some cool thrashing parts. BIG sound basically metallic and are unpredictable up to a point. The best song here is "More Time." Too bad it's a Meters cover. The 3 dub songs just don't do it for me. A lot of potential here and when you weigh out the differences, they fall in their favor. Try it out.

- John L.

SILOS

Cuba, LP

Record Collect/ILA

I don't like this record. That doesn't mean you won't like it. Everyone who loved the Silos' critically acclaimed debut, "About Her Steps," will devour Cuba as though it were Turkish delight. However, those who found "About..." good but not great may find that the Silos do not fulfill their initial promise.

Although not every song on "About" was memorable, the EP included enough gems that the lesser songs were unobtrusive. Now, on their first full-length LP, the Silos replace quality with quantity. They still have pretty melodies, guitars that can ring or sting, hooks at every turn, and delicate string arrangements. The difference is that they've started believing their "New Velvet Underground" press.

On Cuba, unlike the debut, it's easy to pick out the Velvet Underground influences: "Mary's Getting Married" = "Foggy Notion;" "Just This Morning" = "Rock And Roll." Being derivative is okay if the new song is as enjoyable as the old. In the Silos' case, they've got the Velvets' riffs and grooves down pat. What they lack is soul.

Besides Cuba's dearth of quality material, its subject matter is not particularly stimulating. The album should be called "The Joy Of Marriage." Almost every song goes, "When I see my wife..." If lead Silo Walter Salas-Humara has a perfectly serene marriage, good for him. It just doesn't make interesting song material. There are no songs on Cuba about breaking up & reuniting, or about striving to keep the light in one's marriage.

In short, Cuba is more complacent than a Himalayan sleeping toad. Easy listening for the post-cowpunk generation.

- Dawn Eden

(Record Collect, Box 20345,
Thompkins Sq. Sta., NY, NY 10009.)

THE PLAGUE

"Naraka," EP

Immortum, Box 7070, NYC 10163-6026

Despite lyrics about razor slashings, "vampyres," and bloody murder, the only real horror here is Margot Pay's voice. Everything else is just annoyingly silly, and anyone who finds this Halloween "Gothic" business even faintly interesting should qualify for handicapped parking.

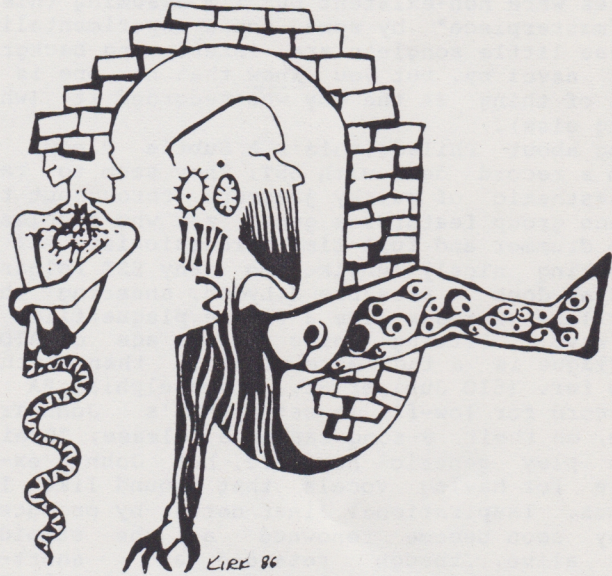
- J.T.

SCREECHING WEASEL

Underdog Records, Box 182, Chicago, IL 60614

Walloping punk-core, delivered with a healthy dose of humor, thrash, power chords, and speed, topped off by the hardy vocals of Ben Weasel. All the band members have funny names but play better than you'd expect, and with 27 songs here, there's bound to be at least a few you'll like. Me, I like "Experience The Ozzfish," a well-meaning tribute to one of the Windy City's most awful bands.

- J.T.



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Yes, it's true. After an absence of many issues, Jersey Beat's infamous demo-tape column returns, due to the overwhelming public demand (and because Jim Testa asked me so nicely). [And because Mickey Yuck didn't hand in his column - Ed.] So with no further adieu, onward to this month's batch of C-30's... First up is the latest spew from longtime Jersey pop idol Chris Moffa & The Competition. Moffa resurfaces on the scene after allegedly "giving up rock 'n roll for good" several years ago. Where Moffa's songs used to sound suspiciously (criminally?) like The Clash, his new 4-song, 4-track demo leans heavily toward vintage Elvis Costello.

read tape

by L. Cravat

The group features bouncy Farfisa, some look-sharp rhythms, Moffa's sing-song, Elvis-tinged vocalizing, and a squeaky-clean "No Wave" production (circa '79) on tunes Drain." All of this is harmless

like "Lugar Boy" and "All Down The Drain." All of this is harmless enough, but it does involve an alarming feeling of deja vu'. From Forest Hills, NY, comes **Medicine Sunday**, a quartet whose 5-song demo sounds influenced by equal parts R.E.M. and Echo & The Bunnymen. Not very original, but these guys do it well, and if you appreciate things of that ilk, you should dig. (They're better, by far, than, say Winter Hours; but then, who isn't?) Songs include "The Big Machine" (lotsa mechanical drone guitar, very nice), "Dirty Little Planet" (very R.E.M., complete with mumbling), and "Sun Factory Ltd." (cool title, no?). (PO Box 394, Forest Hills, NY 11305) Best band name of the issue goes to **Lubricated Love Bags**, who kindly posted us a copy of their 12-song "instrumental" noise cassette. The liner notes were non-existent but I'm assuming this is a 4-track solo bedroom "masterpiece" by some sonic experimentalist in the SMERSH mode. These little songlets are interesting background music to, oh, pick your navel by, but you know that no one is ever as amused by this sort of thing as the guy who recorded it (who no doubt listens to nothing else).

Everything about Philadelphia's **A Subtle Plague** seems designed to land them a record deal with SST: They seem to radiate the Lawndale label's aesthetic of quirky jazzcore throughout their 5-song tape. The 6-piece group features a gonzo sax who doubles on percussion, as well as a drummer and full-time percussionist. All these riddims keep things cooking nicely (unlike too many SST releases), and vocalist Patrick Ryan does a passable J.Lydon, sneering through lyrics like, "Yeah our love spreads like a subtle plague/fills our bodies like a ten-foot wave." Fitting words for the age of AIDS, and at least **A Subtle Plague** is a tad more original than anything else in this column so far. (510 Juniper St., Philadelphia, PA 19147.)

A new record for low-fi is set by NYC's **John Trend & His Nervous Breakdown**, on their 9-song cassette release, "Brains For Sale." The Breakdown play generic hardcore, but John (ex-Letch Patrol) is remarkable for having vocals that sound like Iggy Pop imitating Uncle Remus. Inspirational liner notes by producer Dan Hoyt: "John Trend may soon become renowned as the stupidest rock 'n roll performer alive...though retarded and short-sighted, the music on the tape...(is) a social statement clearly years ahead of my time." [Gerard, check your service.]

And last but not least, the most professional cassette release of our current batch, a 5-song package by NJ's **Half A Chicken**. This quartet plays ballsy, straightforward power pop with revved up punk leanings on tunes like "Feeling It Now" and "On My Way." Pick hit: "Fifty Favorite Dead People," which enumerates some of 'em - "How about Jim, or General Grant? Two real partying dudes - threw up on himself, threw up on his horse, now that's the way to go." The press release claims they'll be recording an EP "with Bob Mould" this Fall. (Rhetorical question of the issue: Why does everyone fall over backwards to get Mould or Grant Hart as producers when everything they touch sounds like mud?)

Well, that's it for this time, keep those C-30s and C-60s coming, and remember: You don't need talent, originality, or inspiration to record a demo - just a tape deck.



RUNAWAY

read tape

by L. Cravat

need help?

write "Ask The Anarchist"
% Yosi, 58 13th St.
Toms River NJ 08753

DRAMARAMA

Box Office Bomb, LP

?/Important

Hard to believe these guys could leave NJ, move to Los Angeles, buddy up with Rodney Bingenheimer, pal around with the Bangles...and still make a record that's gonna be a contender for my Top 5 right up to New Year's Eve. John Easdale, singer and songwriter, has come up with 10 songs here that just totally...work: Lyrics, hooks, groove, you name it, he's got it down. One thing he's learned in Hollywood is name-dropping the lyrics are full of famous people, used as metaphors or just good rhymes, from Ron Swoboda to Dobie Gillis. The music, grounded in a Velvet Underground groove, sports a pulsing rhythm section and a flawless mix of keyboards and guitars; never less than listenable and often compelling, even when (esp. when?) Easdale's swiping a riff from somebody else (like the change from "Search & Destroy" that pops up unexpectedly in one tune). Who'd believed they could go Hollywood and still remember what makes a good garage band? The last song is called "Modesty Personified;" if you've ever met these guys, you appreciate the irony there. But God, they've gotten good.

-J.T.

ARTLESS

"Public Display/"Terrorist," 45
Seidboard World Enterprises

75 Bleecker, New York, NY 10012

When this came in, I threw it on the ol' Onkyo and gave it a quick listen. Hmm, I said, familiar names from other Seidboard releases. A quick listen. "Oh, more noise." And put it aside. But when I came back to it, I was surprised: This is a pretty good record for noise. Side A is an almost Dead Milkmen-ish sendup of those touchy/feely in-love types you see entwined wherever you go. Over a Bo Diddley hardcore stomp, Mykel Board rants, "Public display/ of affection/was it meant to give us an erection?/don't want to raise no objection/hope you get an infection." I love it. It even ends with a John Lydon satire. Side B is more serious, as Board voices his contempt and fear, not of the "worldly Abduls dressed in bedsheets and towels," but of the "tiny terrorist planted inside my head by the people who say I'll get lung cancer if I smoke/AIDS if I fuck/or die in a car crash if I drink a beer." All this over a slow grunge with a growled "Braver New World" chorus. Worth every penny they'll soak you for.

- Jamie Barrett

FLESHTONES

Fleshtones Vs. Reality, LP

Emergo

Bravol They're back! After several years in vinyl limbo (after being dropped like a broken maraca by I.R.S.), the 'Shtones return with a killer LP, finally elevating them, for once & all, into that category of immortals who seem to rock on forever. Not that this combo hasn't been an indispensable part of the Amerockan rock scene for years now; but there were a few shaky moments when it looked like Zaremba & Co. might have shaken & stomped their last. Yet here they are, better than ever, returning to a rockin' R&B sound (and away from the monotone garage stomp of Hexbreaker) with a passel of new hits. Even Miss Wendy Wild and the Love Delegation lend a hand, and it's one big happy party from Side 1, Cut 1 right thru to the end. "Nothing Gonna Bring Me Down" goes the Streng/Zaremba closer. Amen, brother, amen.

- J.T.

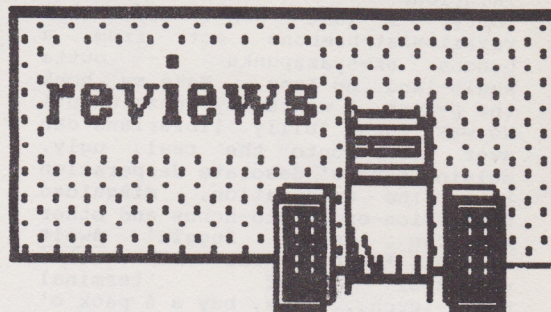
WHOOPIING CRANES

That's What I Need, LP

Zip, 226 E. 10th, #5, New York, NY 10003

I'd be a lot happier with this record if singer/guitarist Bob Lazaroff was more secure with his voice and the songwriting was a little less ambiguous. The songs are pretty good as is, with nice, clear, big-sounding drums, Gang Of Four guitars, and gurgling bass, all played quite decently. When Lazaroff relaxes a bit and the band clicks, it's good. Witness "What A Week" and "Never Turn Away," quick (not fast), tight songs with a sonic & lyric edge. I'd like to hear their next one.

- J.B.



SWANIC YOUTH

"Sonic Yoot"/"Swan Jovi" 45

Seidboard World Enterprises

75 Bleecker St., NYC 10012

This may or may not be members of the leading deathartnoise combo hereabouts having fun [It isn't - Ed.] It'd be better if it is, and the credits (Baby M on harmonica and Zeppo Ramone on drums & vocals) are obscurely goofy with reason. Pretty funny grunge-calypto boast on "Sonic Yoot" and a complete mangling of my friend Robyn's fave NJ boys' big hit ("shot through the heart...") on "Swan Jovi." Liked the real S.Youth potshot at the Top 40, "Cicccone Youth," better; liked this group's name more, though.

- Jamie Barrett

GOVERNMENT ISSUE

You, LP

Giant

Less thrash than you'd expect from a veteran D.C. punk combo, lots of strong guitar licks and a powerful punk/rock kick, and gosh, they've even been to Europe now. Who would've guessed Stabb'd outlast all the competition and emerge as the elder spokesman of D.C. hardcore?

-J.T.

THE WYLDE MAMMOTHS

"Four Wolly (sic) Giants" EP

Mystery Scene & Marc Richter

Karl-Friedrichstr. 28, 7830

Emmendingen, W. Germany

These guys studied their "Nuggets" like good boys, probably at the expense of their English lessons, as the record's title reveals [or it could be a joke, Jamie - Ed.] Neat Lyre-shaped guitars and Brian Jones haircuts on the cover, and pretty cool, if a bit simplistic, music within. They have a full-length LP out. If you're not into complex chord changes, like a little twang (tho not necessarily jangle) in your guitars, and a little soul in your vocals (from SWEDEN, of all places!), I'd plunk down a a few & pick this one up.

- Jamie Barrett

[Special thanks to Art Black for this 'un.]

ANGRY SAMOANS

Inside My Brain, EP

PVC

Nice move on Jem's part to reissue this essential link in the genesis of L.A. punk-to-hardcore. Fast, funny, nasty, hooky, and smart, if you don't already have this, don't even think about it, just buy one. You need this record. Trust me.

- J.T.

MEKONS

Honky Tonkin', LP
Twin/Tone

Sorry, I just don't buy this revisionist-hambone act from a buncha ex-spazzpunks -- outta Anglo-land no less. Make my honk the p-tonk, I want my spuzz uncut! No way these 'billy librarians can ever latch onto the real, ugly, pulsing core o' desolate desperation that the uneducation, misguided Depression-era proto-hobos and other American losers fuggin' dwelt within. As for their much-vaunted portrayal of terminal booze-lurch...i sez, buy a 6 pack o' Schlitz Red Bull and live the damned dream yrself, ya pencilnecks! Or pick up John Cale's stuff on Island if you must insist on voyeurism.

- Howard W.



MIA

After The Fact, LP
Flipside

'Minds me of the Diodes, only they never got a chance to grow up this much. Or the opportunity to have absorbed the examples o' DU, Burma, et. al. Not that MIA sound like a buncha MPLS-obsessive simps. They're far more straighthead. Just that their work exudes a sort of tasteful sophistication 'n ambitiousness underneath the strum 'n twang most probably stemming from previous exposure to the above. Not more essential an experience than eating, dumping, or sleeping (like, say, Beefheart's Trout Mask or the first Germs' alb) but "brisk" listening.

- Howard W.

CRAZY BACKWARDS ALPHABET

Same, LP
SST

This strange jazzy rock LP features John French (original bassist for Dixie Dregs), Henry Kaiser on guitar, Andy West (from Capt. Beefheart's Magic Band) and Michael Maksymenko. With folk-like accented vocals and clean cut guitars, these guys diversify SST Records even more. Using sax and keyboards in addition to their basic R&R format, CBA puts out a pretty decent sounding album. But at times this can be difficult listening due to unending solos under the vocals.

- John Lisa

BEASTIE BOYS

"She's Crafty"/"No Sleep Til Brooklyn" - 12" EP - Def Jam/CBS
My 2 ultest mo's from Licensed To Ill - truly progressive metal revisions...Bonzo's slugbeat, stole' back from the beatbox and clean of the rappin' stuff which ain't always nearly so brill, this is an Essential Buy, ye Thrillkillers. Figger in the calculatedly gross verbiage and ya got a hunk o' heavy duty offense Mykel Board would be hard put to worsen.

- Howard W.

GREEN RIVER

"Dry As A Bone" EP - Sub-Pop
Box 20645, Seattle, WA 98102

Overall, not much to look forward to here. This Washington State outfit shows up replete with long long hair, cowboy belts, big hangy things around their necks, skinny arms wrapped around a Les Paul, plenty o' Creedence references (their publishing co. is Bad Moon Music), and an oh-boy-you-bet-we're-bad-rock'n'rollers attitude previously reserved for the Crue & their ilk. The music usually starts off promisingly enough but falls quickly into the land of the half-hearted, gradually speeding up to an unsatisfying musical climax sort of thing. The guitars are that horrible trebly wimp fake metal/too clean distortion and singer Arm (yeah right ok) needs to learn that you can actually scream with feeling. The only thing that redeems this is "Ozzie," a midtempo bit that shows the band can emote once they slow things down to where the only requirement isn't speed, which isn't bad if you know how to use it. I didn't think the 70's were that great anyway.

- Jamie Barrett

THE WINDBREAKERS

A Different Sort, LP
DB

BOBBY SUTLIFFE

Only Ghosts Remain, LP
PVC

Of the two ex-Windbreakers, Tim Lee got custody of the name but Bobby Sutcliffe who most retained the band's seamless, starry-eyed pop sense, best represented (for me, anyway) on their Homestead release, Terminal. While Lee has been recording constantly, and touring frequently, with a variety of different combos (all under the name Windbreakers), Sutcliffe has pretty much been on hiatus until now. I tend to prefer Sutcliffe's record, although both offer the sort of rangy guitar-oriented pop that's all the rage in CMJ and Rockpool circles. Lee tends to rely on a small selection of wellworn chord changes and a voice that's often too garagey for its own good, while Sutcliffe's Only Ghosts Remain (recorded at Mitch Easter's Drive In) layers hooks on top of harmonies until you start to see (Big) stars shimmer behind your eyes. Now if they'd only get back together, think of the record that'd be...

- J.T.

63 EYES

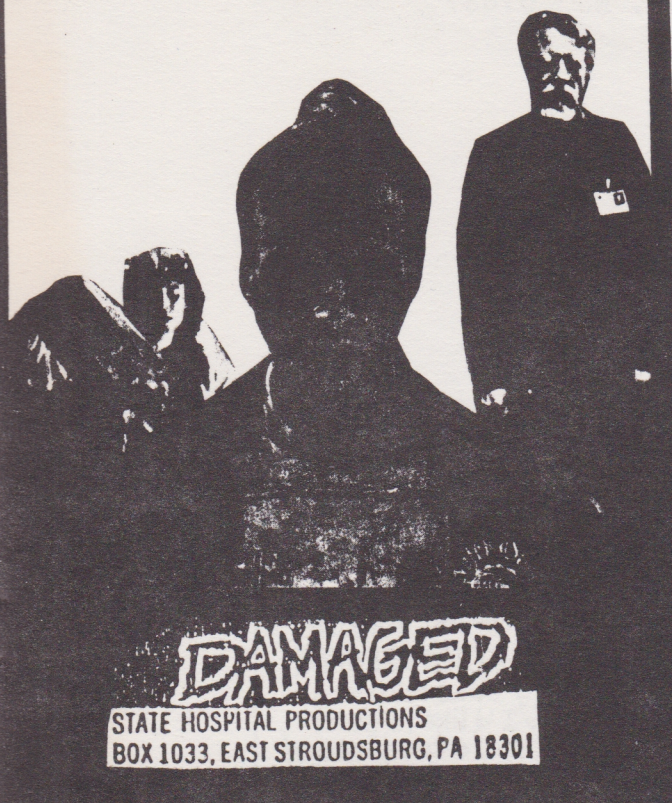
Look For The Mothmen, LP
Poolbur, 1907 36 St.
Parkersburg, WV 26104

It's always nice to hear from West Va., home of the Mountaineers (among others), but that fact that this record exists is probably the best thing about it. These guys apparently got ahold of a Dead Kennedys record and listened to it too many times - most of the vocal phrasings and many of the musical ones are almost direct ripoffs. The lyrics read like the Japanese-translated-into-English instructions you find in cheap radios & fireworks. Otherwise, decent playing, okay riffs, and altogether well done...but nothing special.

- Jamie B.

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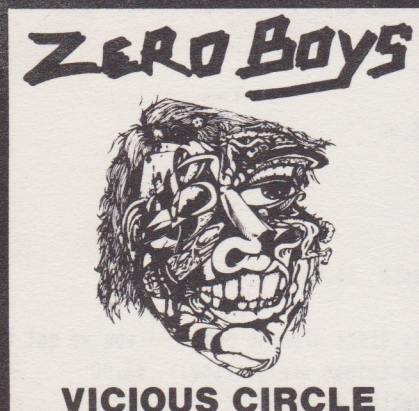


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